

16. Complaints Policy

Policy statement: MFC recognises that everyone who uses our services, activities and/or facilities has the right to a high standard of service and a right to complain if they are not happy with any aspect of what we do. Learning from complaints helps MFC to improve the services that are provided. Therefore, the purpose of this complaints policy and procedure is to:

- a. Help MFC to provide a service of the highest standard to everyone that engages with the organisation
- b. Help MFC to ensure that everyone that uses (or wishes to use) the organisation's services know that they have a right to complain if they need to
- c. Help MFC to deal with complaints in a positive way and use them to improve the organisations services
- d. Set out the issues that could be covered under this procedure
- e. Set out the steps everyone should take if they wish to make a complaint to MFC
- f. Set out how MFC will deal with complaints in a fair and consistent way

Who this complaints policy and procedures applies to: This complaints policy and procedure applies to all children, adults, parents and families, as well as carers and advocates. In addition it applies to every person that attends - or wishes to make use of - MFC's facilities and services.

However, this policy and procedure is not intended to be used by MFC's staff or volunteers who may be unhappy about their own experience in the workplace. In these circumstances, staff members should use the **Grievance Procedure** (found in section four of the Employee Handbook) and volunteers should use the **Complaints Procedure for Volunteers** found in the Volunteers Handbook.

The complaints policy and procedure are also not intended to cover concerns that staff may have about issues of possible malpractice or wrongdoing in the workplace. These concerns should be dealt with under the **Whistle Blowing Policy & Procedure** found in this Safeguarding Handbook.

If anyone, whether an MFC staff member, child , adult, parent, family member, carer or advocate is concerned that a child or adult may be at risk of harm, they should use the relevant procedures contained within this Safeguarding Handbook - rather than this complaints policy and procedure.

MFC will seek to deal with complaints by:

- Defining clearly what is mean by a complaint
- Setting out a procedure that can be easily followed and understood
- Making sure that everyone knows about this policy and procedure
- Producing child and adult friendly material explaining this policy and procedure
- Reassuring people that they will not be penalised in any way for using the complaints procedure and that MFC will respond positively to any complaints made in good faith
- Offering extra support to those who need help to make a complaint
- Taking a staged approach to complaints, that takes account of the level of seriousness and the possibility of resolution at different points
- Investigating each complaint as objectively and fully as reasonably possible
- Keeping the complainant informed during the course of the investigation, as well as about the outcome of their complaint
- Keeping clear records of complaints and of how they are resolved

Reviewed & Updated: September 2018

MFC will review this **Complaints Policy** and best practice at least annually. In addition, more frequent reviews will be undertaken following any major safeguarding incident, incident learning outcomes, organisational changes, as well as changes to legislation.