

My Safe Haven Ltd – Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

My Safe Haven Ltd is committed to providing safe, high-quality crisis intervention and respite care for children and young people. We recognise that, despite our best efforts, concerns or dissatisfaction may arise. This procedure sets out how complaints will be managed fairly, transparently, and in a timely manner.

We view complaints as an opportunity to learn, improve our services, and strengthen safeguarding practice.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to complaints made by:

- Children and young people
- Parents, carers, and family members
- Social workers and placing authorities
- Professionals and partner agencies
- Members of the public

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction about the service provided, actions taken, decisions made, or behaviour of staff that requires investigation and response.

Safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with our Safeguarding Policy and may be escalated immediately to relevant authorities where required.

3. Principles

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the following principles:

- Complaints will be taken seriously and treated respectfully.
- The complainant will not be disadvantaged or treated unfairly as a result of making a complaint.
- The process will be fair, transparent, and proportionate.
- Confidentiality will be maintained in line with data protection and safeguarding requirements.
- Lessons learned will be used to improve service quality.

Children and young people will be supported to raise concerns in a way that is accessible and appropriate to their age and understanding.

4. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints may be made:

- In writing (including via the website complaints form)
- By email

- By letter
- In person
- By telephone

If a complaint is made verbally, a written record will be created and shared with the complainant for confirmation where appropriate.

Where necessary, reasonable adjustments will be made to support individuals in submitting a complaint, including alternative formats or advocacy support.

5. Stage One – Acknowledgement

All complaints will be acknowledged within **2–3 working days** of receipt.

The acknowledgement will:

- Confirm that the complaint has been received
- Summarise the issues raised
- Outline the next steps
- Provide an expected response timeframe

If the matter involves safeguarding concerns, appropriate immediate action will be taken in line with statutory requirements.

6. Stage Two – Investigation and Response

An appropriate manager or designated senior member of staff will investigate the complaint. The investigation may include:

- Reviewing records and documentation
- Speaking with relevant staff members
- Meeting or speaking with the complainant (if appropriate)
- Consulting external professionals where necessary

A formal written response will be provided within **10 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged.

The response will include:

- A summary of the complaint
- The findings of the investigation
- Any actions taken or to be taken
- An explanation of decisions made
- Information about escalation, if the complainant remains dissatisfied

If additional time is required due to the complexity of the complaint, the complainant will be informed in writing with an explanation and revised timeframe.

7. Stage Three – Escalation

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage Two, they may request a review of the complaint.

The review will be conducted by a senior person not directly involved in the original investigation, where possible. A further written response will be provided outlining the final position of My Safe Haven Ltd.

Where appropriate, complainants will be advised of their right to refer the matter to relevant external bodies, such as:

- The placing local authority
- The relevant regulatory body (if applicable)
- The Information Commissioner's Office (for data protection concerns)

8. Safeguarding and Whistleblowing

Where a complaint raises concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person, safeguarding procedures will take priority. This may include referral to the appropriate local authority or safeguarding partnership.

Complaints relating to serious staff misconduct may also be addressed under the Whistleblowing Policy or Disciplinary Procedure where appropriate.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in accordance with UK data protection legislation. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in line with safeguarding obligations.

Records of complaints and outcomes will be securely stored and retained in accordance with our Data Retention Policy.

10. Learning and Service Improvement

Complaints are reviewed as part of our quality assurance and governance processes. Themes and patterns are monitored to identify areas for service development, training needs, and safeguarding improvements.

11. Review of This Procedure

This Complaints Procedure will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to legislative or operational changes.

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Approved By: Carrie Appleton – Company Director