



Marcia Care and Education Complaints

Complaints Procedure and Escalation Process

Marcia Care and Education welcomes feedback and recognises the right of children, young people, families, professionals, tutors, commissioners and staff to raise concerns or complaints without fear of disadvantage or discrimination.

All complaints will be treated seriously, investigated fairly and handled in a timely and transparent manner.

Principles

Marcia Care and Education aims to:

- Resolve concerns as quickly and informally as possible.
- Ensure complaints are handled fairly and objectively.
- Protect children, young people and adults from disadvantage resulting from raising concerns.
- Learn from complaints and improve service quality.
- Ensure complaints involving senior leadership are reviewed independently.

Who Can Make a Complaint?

Complaints may be made by:

- Children and young people.
- Parents and carers.
- Staff members.
- Tutors and professionals.
- Social workers and Local Authority representatives.
- Any individual receiving or commissioning services from Marcia Care and Education.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised with the allocated practitioner or Learning Support Mentor.

The practitioner will:

- Listen to the concern.
- Clarify the issue.
- Attempt to resolve the matter informally.
- Record the concern and outcome.

A response will normally be provided within 5 working days.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the matter is not resolved informally, a formal complaint may be submitted to the Managing Director.

The complaint should include:

- Name and contact details.
- Details of the complaint.
- Relevant dates and information.
- Desired outcome.

The Managing Director will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days.
- Review all relevant information.
- Speak with those involved where necessary.
- Provide a written outcome.

A full response will normally be provided within 10 working days of acknowledgement.

Independence and Conflicts of Interest

Marcia Care and Education recognises that the Managing Director may also undertake direct work with children and young people as a Learning Support Mentor.

To ensure fairness and transparency, complaints concerning the Managing Director, Learning Support Mentor practice, professional conduct, service delivery decisions, safeguarding practice or senior leadership actions will not be investigated by the individual who is the subject of the complaint.

Stage 3 – Independent Review

Where:

- The complaint concerns the Managing Director;
- The complaint concerns a Learning Support Mentor;
- A conflict of interest may exist;
- The complainant remains dissatisfied following Stage 2;

The complaint will be referred to:

Dr Ryan McManus

Independent Complaints Reviewer
Marcia Care and Education

Dr McManus is independent of the day-to-day operational management of Marcia Care and Education and will conduct an impartial review.

The review may include:

- Examination of records and documentation.
- Discussion with relevant staff.
- Discussion with the complainant.
- Review of actions already taken.
- Consideration of whether policies and procedures have been followed appropriately.

Following the review, Dr McManus may:

- Uphold the complaint.
- Partially uphold the complaint.
- Not uphold the complaint.
- Recommend further investigation.
- Recommend service improvements.

A written outcome will normally be issued within 20 working days.

Stage 4 – External Escalation

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the completion of the internal complaints process, concerns may be referred to the relevant external body, including:

- Commissioning Local Authority.
- Children’s Social Care.
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

- Relevant Safeguarding Partnership.
- Funding or commissioning body.
- Other regulatory or oversight organisations relevant to the service being provided.

Contact details for the appropriate body will be provided upon request.

Safeguarding Concerns

Where a complaint contains allegations relating to:

- Harm to a child or vulnerable person.
- Professional misconduct.
- Abuse or neglect.
- Criminal behaviour.
- Significant safeguarding concerns.

The matter may be referred immediately to safeguarding agencies, Children's Social Care, the Police or the LADO without waiting for the complaints process to conclude.

Such referrals will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Recording and Monitoring

All complaints will be recorded within the Complaints Register.

Records will include:

- Date received.
- Nature of complaint.
- Person responsible for investigation.
- Actions taken.
- Outcome.
- Learning identified.
- Improvements implemented.

Records will be stored securely in accordance with GDPR and data protection requirements.

Quality Assurance and Review

Complaints information will be reviewed annually by the Managing Director and Independent Complaints Reviewer to:

- Identify themes and trends.
- Monitor response times.
- Evaluate effectiveness of complaint handling.
- Improve service quality and accountability.

A summary of learning and improvements arising from complaints will be incorporated into quality assurance and service development processes.

Protection from Reprisal

No child, young person, parent, carer, professional, commissioner, tutor or staff member will be disadvantaged, treated unfavourably or subjected to retaliation for raising a complaint in good faith.

Support will be offered where required to enable children and young people to express their views and participate fully in the complaints process.