



MK CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION

Complaints Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Milton Keynes Christian Foundation is committed to providing the best services and products it can in all areas of its work. However, we recognise that as an organisation and as individuals we make mistakes and also at times act inappropriately. It is our wish to quickly respond to and resolve issues and complaints that arise. This policy seeks to create a positive approach to complaints. Complaints are valued as a means to continuously improve the services offered by Milton Keynes Christian Foundation.

2. SCOPE

This complaints policy covers complaints made regarding the services and products delivered by Milton Keynes Christian Foundation or its representatives.

This policy does not deal with:

- Anything that happened more than one year ago, unless the Service User/stakeholder/customer can show they have only recently become aware of the situation
- Complaints by one Service User about another Service User except when a service or product is being delivered by a service user eg. A trainee

3. OBJECTIVES

- To provide an effective means for Service Users and customers to complain if they are dissatisfied in any way with the service they receive
- To ensure complaints are dealt with in a courteous and efficient manner and are resolved without avoidable delay
- To ensure that our products, services and ways of working are continuously improved

4. HOW WE MAKE POSITIVE USE OF COMPLAINTS

4.1. We welcome comments and complaints from our Service Users and customers. Complaints can offer valuable feedback to enable the continued improvement of all that we do.

4.2. Our complaints procedure makes it clear to customers and Service Users:

- How they can complain
- What will happen when they complain
- What they can expect Milton Keynes Christian Foundation to do as a result of their complaint
- What they can do if they are unhappy with the outcome

4.3. The policy provides a process to help employees deal with dissatisfied customers and Service Users and to correct things if appropriate

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1. For the purpose of this policy a complaint is defined as:

"An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of a product



or service or the lack of expected action by MKCF, its staff or contractors”

5.2. Expression of dissatisfaction – it is for the Service User or customer to decide whether or not s/he is expressing dissatisfaction. It is important to remember that reporting a fault or a problem is not necessarily a complaint, but may be a request for a service. An example of this would be reporting a faulty light. In most cases, the Service User will accept that lights occasionally develop faults and would only be dissatisfied if the light was not repaired after being reported, or if it had been faulty for a long time with no action.

5.3. Standard of service – A service User or customer may express dissatisfaction with the standard of service or product received because:

- MKCF has not achieved the standard it says it will provide
- The service or product has not been provided to a standard the Service User thinks is acceptable

5.4. Actions – this can mean the action of MKCF as a whole, or someone employed by MKCF. It might include:

- MKCF doing something that Service User did not want it to do
- MKCF delivering its services or products in an unsatisfactory way or to a satisfactory quality
- Unacceptable behaviour (including rudeness, violence or aggression) from MKCF staff, Service Users or contractors towards customers

5.5. Lack of action – this might include:

- MKCF failing to do something which it has been asked to do
- MKCF failing to do something which the Service User thinks it should have done, even if it was not actually asked to do it

6. WHO CAN COMPLAIN

6.1. Anyone dissatisfied with a product, the service, actions or lack of action of the Milton Keynes Christian Foundation – or someone acting on their behalf with their permission – can use the complaints procedure.

6.2. Complaints employees may have about MKCF as an employer should be made through the grievance procedure.

6.3. MKCF cannot deal with anonymous complaints

7. SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

7.1. Many people feel daunted by the prospect of making a complaint. They may feel they don't know how to go about it, or how best to put their case. They may fear that MKCF will withhold services or treat them less favourably if they complain. MKCF welcomes complaints and will encourage people to seek support, and can assist them to find this support if necessary.

8. RIGHTS

8.1. Our service users have the right:

- To have a representative help them with their complaint
- To confidentiality – if an investigation cannot proceed without the complainant being identified, the complainant will be given the option



whether or not to continue.

- To be kept informed of the progress of their complaints
- To receive an apology if their complaint is upheld
- To be informed of any changes to MKCF policy or procedures arising from a complaint
- To be asked if they are satisfied with the outcome at the end of the process, and referred to the next stage of complaint if they are not.

8.2. Our employees have the right:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy at all times by customers, Service Users and other staff
- To have the support of a representative if they are the subject of a complaint

9. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

9.1. Milton Keynes Christian Foundation ensures that all Service Users and stakeholders have access to clear information on how to voice complaints and comments. Service Users in particular will be provided with the support they need in order to make their views known.

9.2. The complaints procedure will be published on our website and available on request. Trainees will be made aware of the complaints process at induction and as a part of employability skills sessions.

9.3. We will make sure that all those using our services are aware of the complaints procedure and make available forms and support to assist in their complaint. At any stage of this complaints procedure the complainant may request the presence of friend, parent or guardian as appropriate.

9.4. Copies of the policy are available on the shared drive. Training on complaint handling will be made available as necessary.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1. The responsibilities for the resolution of complaints are set out under the appropriate stage headings. At the informal stage, the staff member in receipt of the complaint should attempt to resolve it, if this is not possible, the matter should be referred through the formal complaints procedure.

10.2. Team Leaders and senior staff, as appropriate, are responsible for the following:

- Ensuring a complaint progresses through each stage in accordance with the procedure
- Satisfactory progress is made to ensure that every attempt is made to resolve the complaint as soon as possible
- That data is kept in accordance with the monitoring requirements of this procedure

11. COMPLAINTS AGAINST STAFF

11.1. If a complaint regarding staff actions or behaviour is found to be valid, then the issue will be referred to the appropriate procedure, such as the disciplinary procedure, and investigated and resolved in accordance with those requirements.



12. COMPLAINT STAGES - INFORMAL

12.1. Once a Service User wishing to complain has approached a member of staff, they must first establish if the complaint or comment is a minor matter that can be rectified simply and without further action. In such cases, there may be no need to seek a written version of the complaint/comment. It is envisaged that the vast majority of complaints will be resolved at this stage.

13. COMPLAINT STAGES – FORMAL – STAGE 1

13.1. All complaints should be recorded on a complaints form. Service Users should be offered assistance in putting their complaint in writing. Relevant staff members can complete the form together with the Service User, ensuring that the form is read back to the Service User for confirmation, and signed by them.

13.2. The complaint should be directed to the relevant enterprise or team lead/manager. The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days.

13.3. An investigation will then be carried out, and a conclusion reached.

13.4. A full response to the complaint should be sent to the customer or Service User within 10 working days from the date of the acknowledgement letter. The Service User will also be offered the opportunity to discuss the outcome of the complaint in person.

13.5. In the event the investigation takes longer to resolve, prompt responses should still be made to any outstanding issues and the Service User kept informed.

13.6. If the investigation reveals a problem with staff conduct, a recommendation should be made on how this will be rectified. If formal disciplinary action is recommended, the Disciplinary Policy will be used.

14. COMPLAINT STAGES – FORMAL – STAGE 2

14.1. If the customer or Service User is not satisfied with the response, they may make a complaint to the Director. The Director will only consider the complaint if the above stage of the complaints procedure has been followed.

14.2. Complaints to the Directors must be made in writing within 28 days of receiving the full reply provided in stage 1 of the complaints procedure.

14.3. The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days.

14.4. A full response to the complaint should be sent to the customer or Service User within 10 working days from the date of the acknowledgement letter. The customer or Service User will also be offered the opportunity to discuss the outcome of the complaint in person.

14.5. In the event the investigation takes longer to resolve, prompt responses should still be made to any outstanding issues and the Service User kept informed.



14.6. If the investigation reveals a problem with staff conduct, a recommendation should be made on how this will be rectified. If formal disciplinary action is recommended, the Disciplinary Policy will be adhered to.

15. COMPLAINT STAGES – FORMAL – STAGE 3

15.1. Should the matter still not be resolved, the customer or Service User should inform the Director within 28 days of receiving the full reply provided in stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

15.2. The Director will refer the matter to a complaints panel. The make up of this panel will vary according to the nature of the complaint and the area of work that the complaint relates to. As a minimum it will involve a Board member of the Charity.

15.3. The panel will listen, investigate through interviewing those involved and a decision on the response will be made.

15.4. A full response will be made within 10 working days from the date of the acknowledgement letter. The Service User will also be offered the opportunity to discuss the outcome in person.

15.5. Under some of our contracts, there may be further stages of the process if the Service User is still not satisfied. In these situations, the Chair of the Panel should make the complainant aware of those rights.

16. STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY

16.1. In the event of informal or formal action against a member of staff, the Service User/complainant should not be informed of any of the details.

17. MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REPORTING

17.1. The Director will keep a record of the complaint, copies of any correspondence and monitor the progress of resolution, as well as recorded the outcome.

17.2. This information will be reported quarterly to the Board. The reports will contain a summary of issues and action taken to resolve these as a result of complaints received. This information will be assessed to determine whether any changes in policies, procedures or working practices are appropriate.