

3. COMPLAINTS

Document Title:	Complaints
Unique Reference Number:	03
Document Author:	YMCA Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Paul McDonald
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing and reviewing Policy	Paul McDonald Michelle Cullen
Person responsible for approving Policy	Paul McDonald
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email & Hard Copy
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email & Hard Copy
Date the Document is Effective From:	November 2020
Scheduled Review Date:	Annually
Number of Pages:	2

This policy is available and has been communicated to parents/guardians and staff.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy.

Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of Intent: We are committed to giving careful attention and a courteous, timely response to suggestions, comments or complaints so that we can learn from them and continuously improve our Service. All complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner without fear, favour or prejudice.

The Service has a consistent and unbiased approach used to manage all complaints within the Service.

All complaints are investigated promptly, taken seriously and handled appropriately and sensitively. Complaints are managed and reported in line with the Service's Complaints policies and procedures.

The written record of a complaint is available on the premises for inspection by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Where a Child In the Service Makes a Complaint or Expresses a Concern to his/her parent or guardian:

Where a parent notifies the Service that a child has made a complaint to them or expressed a concern about the Service or a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student or volunteer at the Service it is the policy of this Service to treat such notification by a parent/guardian as a complaint and the complaints procedure contained in this policy will immediately come into force.

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BELONG TO HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, SECURE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES.



Where a Child Makes a Complaint or Expresses a Concern to a Staff Member, Contractor, Unpaid Worker, Student or Volunteer at the Service: Where a child makes a complaint or expresses a concern to a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student or volunteer at the Service about a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student or volunteer at the Service, the person to whom the complaint or concern is made must immediately report the matter to the Manager who will contact a child's parents/guardian to arrange to meet with them at the earliest possible opportunity and the Service's complaints procedure will immediately come into force.

Where the complaint is about the Manager, the matter must be reported to the Board of Management.

Where a Child is Overheard Making a Complaint or Expressing a Concern to a Peer in the Service: Where a child is overheard making a complaint or expressing a concern to a peer in the Service the person hearing the conversation shall immediately report the matter to the Manager Russell Wilbourne.

The Manager should immediately contact the child's parents/guardian and to arrange to speak with the child in compliance with the Service's Child Safeguarding Statement.

- All complaints must be made to the Manager Russell Wilbourne
- Where the complaint is made about the Manager the complaint should be referred to the Board of Management who can refer the matter an outside agency such as Tusla, Pobal or An Garda Síochána depending on the nature of the complaint.
- They will be dealt with in an open and impartial manner.
- The complaint [if made verbally] will be documented and remain confidential.
- The complaint will be investigated to assess if the service has breached our policy and procedures.
- This investigation may be carried out by an independent third party if deemed necessary and appropriate
- Staff may be consulted during the investigation process
- If a complaint is made against a staff member the HR policies may be invoked, including the discipline policy
- Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter as quickly and amicably as possible, and to the parents/guardians' satisfaction.
- If agreement cannot be reached informally, the parents/guardians must make a formal complaint in writing to the Manager (or to the Board of Management if the complaint is made about the Manager).
- The parent will be sent an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received and told how it will be dealt with, by whom and within a time frame specified by the Manager (or to the Board of Management if the complaint is made about the Manager) If the complaint is made about the Manager, the Manager can acknowledge receipt of the complaint but may defer to a third party to manage the process
- The Manager will keep dated records summarising what was said and by whom.

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BELONG TO HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, SECURE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES.



- In the case of a complaint made against a member of staff, the staff member involved will be informed that a formal complaint has been made and given full details. The HR policies may be invoked including discipline
- The Manager will arrange to meet with the staff member and discuss the lodged complaint.
- The Manager will record and keep an accurate and detailed document of what was discussed.
- The Manager will review the complaint and consider all the relevant information as discussed and a decision will be made and recommendations if necessary.
- If a parent is not satisfied with the outcome, they may make a further written request to the Board of Directors. Details are available on the Parent Notice Board.
- If a complaint involves a child protection concern, (child abuse, neglect) this is passed to the Designated Liaison Person in the Service and a separate reporting procedure will be followed in line with our Child Protection Policy and Children First 2017.

Appeals:

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint or a satisfactory resolution is not found within 28 days of the Manager's investigation and report, Management will offer (a) the opportunity to appeal the complaint to an external consultant with experience in dealing with complaints or (b) offer mediation. The Board of directors will be involved in setting up the appeals process.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the above interventions, they will be advised that the service is closing off the complaint and if appropriate will refer the complainant elsewhere.
- The agency to which a complaint may be referred may include such organisations as Tusla, HSE, DCYA, HSA depending on the nature of the complaint. We will cooperate fully in any investigation carried out by these agencies
- Upon closure of a complaint, the outcome is recorded with
- details of any recommendations
- details of any changes to practice, policy or statement
- Information about the appeals process
- Complaints will be kept on file for 2 years
- Complaints are kept stored confidentially insert where
- Only management (insert names) have access to complaints

Management of Unsolicited Information to Tusla: The Early Years Inspectorate (EYI) may receive information volunteered by parents, staff or members of the public about our Service. This is known as unsolicited information, and it can include comments, complaints or concerns.

- Unsolicited information which is deemed not to fall under the scope of the 2016 Regulations may be referred to another agency for action as appropriate by Tusla. We will cooperate fully if a complaint is referred to another agency and follow our policy in investigating the complaint ourselves
- Unsolicited information which is deemed to fall under the remit of the Regulations is then risk rated by the inspectorate to determine if there is a risk to the health, safety and welfare of child in the service. Again, we will fully cooperate with any review/risk assessment carried out by Tusla

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BELONG TO HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, SECURE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES.



- If the risk to children is assessed as low by Tusla it may not investigate but our Service will be required to investigate the matter in line with this complaints policy.
- When investigating the complaint we may need to refer to other policies and procedures or follow our employment/staffing policies and procedures
- If there is an unsolicited complaint we will act promptly to endeavour to resolve the issue as quickly as possible
- Like all other complaints we will log unsolicited information and retain for inspection for 2 years
- We will keep all parties informed of the progress of a complaint
- We will record each step of the process and keep detailed notes
- We will give the complainant a full explanation in writing of the outcome and the rationale for the decision
- We will always give the option of appeal the decision as outlined in this policy

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BELONG TO HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, SECURE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES.