



National Network of Parent Carer Forums

'Our Strength Is Our Shared Experience'

Compliments and Complaints Policy

1. Overview

- 1.1 The National Network of Parent Carer Forums ("**NNPCF**") strives for high standards in the participation, engagement and involvement of our representatives and those who work for us. We welcome feedback from individuals, forums, charities and anyone who works with us, on all aspects of our activity. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us evaluate and improve our activity.
- 1.2 The objectives of the NNPCF Compliments and Complaints Policy are to:
 - Ensure everyone knows how to provide feedback and how a complaint will be handled.
 - Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and sensitively within clear timeframes.
 - Provide those we engage with a fair and effective way to complain about our activity.
 - Ensure that compliments and complaints are monitored and used to improve our activity.
- 1.3 The NNPCF Steering Group will ensure that we:
 - Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential, where possible.
 - Record, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
 - Investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated timeframe.
 - Notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal.
 - Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented in order to ensure that there is no re-occurrence.
 - Report, on an annual basis to the membership the number of compliments and complaints received.

2. Definition of a Complaint

- 2.1 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual group or forum, whether justified or not. A person may make a complaint if they feel a NNPCF representative or worker has:
- Failed to meet the NNPCF Code of Conduct.
 - Has made a mistake in the way they have engaged or represented parent carers.
 - Failed to act in a proper way.
- 2.2 This policy and procedure relate only to complaints received about NNPCF representatives and workers.

3. Compliments and Complaints Procedure

3.1 Compliments

Any verbal or written compliments will be recorded by the Programme Officer receiving the compliment and passed to the Co-chairs and Programme Officer for recording on the Compliments Register.

3.2 Complaints

There are 2 stages to the complaints procedure:

Stage One - Complaint

Stage Two – Independent review

Stage One

- 3.3 The NNPCF aims to settle complaints quickly and satisfactorily. The complaint may be resolved informally by way of an apology, by providing an explanation of why a situation or behaviour occurred, or by any other appropriate remedy.
- 3.5 Individuals wishing to make a complaint should contact the NNPCF Programme Officer: info@nnpcf.org.uk or telephone 0207 7608 8708. Alternately they can write to the NNPCF Programme Officer c/o Contact a Family, 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN.

- 3.6 If the user prefers to make a verbal complaint, then the Programme Officer receiving the call will make a written record of this complaint. If the user is willing to/or asks to submit a written complaint, then they are asked to submit in writing relevant information about the individuals they are complaining about, the reasons for the complaint, the date(s) on which events or discussions which may have led to the complaint occurred, and what outcome they would like to see as a result of their complaint.
- 3.7 On receipt, each complaint will be logged on a Complaints Register by the Programme Officer. If the complaint is in relation to the Programme Officer, the complaint should be sent to the Co-chairs. Contact details for the Co-chairs is available on our website www.nnpf.org.uk.
- 3.8 Complaints will be acknowledged within 7 working days. The complaints will be fully investigated usually by the Co-Chairs and a written response provided to the complainant within 30 working days. If the complaint involves a Co-Chair they will not be involved in the investigation, and either the Programme Officer or the Contact a Family Director of Participation will be involved in investigating the complaint.
- 3.9 Individuals will be advised that if they are not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they may appeal within 14 working days and progress to Stage Two.
- 3.10 Occasionally, investigations may take longer, particularly if the complaint is complex.

Should this be the case a holding letter will be sent within 20 working days and a final date given for a conclusion being reached.

Stage Two

- 3.11 If an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome from Stage One they can request an Independent Review within 14 working days and progress to Stage Two.
- 3.12 An appropriately experienced individual who is not a member of the NNPCF would be asked to review the complaint and any investigation or actions taken.
- 3.13 The Independent Individual would then make a recommendation about whether:
- a) They feel the investigation and outcome already arrived at is appropriate.
 - b) If not, any changes to any recommendations or outcomes made in stage 1.

4. Anonymous Compliments and Complaints

- 4.1. Compliments and complaints received anonymously will be recorded and considered, but action may be limited if further information is required to ensure a full and fair investigation.

5. Data Protection

- 5.1 To process a complaint, the NNPCF will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give in response to investigating the complaint. The NNPCF will hold this data securely and only use them to help address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be made known to those who need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public by the NNPCF. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in some circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.