



COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Policy Statement

The Springfield Project aims to provide the highest quality services to our community. Our service users and other stakeholders are the best people to provide feedback on our services and to help us to continuously improve. A range of feedback mechanisms is used by our departmental teams to ensure that the voices of service users inform our service development.

Whilst we strive to provide high quality services, we know that we sometimes make mistakes and that there are always things that we can do better. Comments, compliments and complaints from people using the Springfield Project services give important feedback on the services provided and are one of the mechanisms for continuing to improve our provision.

The aim of this Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy is to ensure that service users are aware of how they can provide comments, compliments and complaints and how these will be dealt with by the Springfield Project.

The Springfield Project will:

- Provide a range of mechanisms for service users to provide comments, compliments and complaints.
- Recognise that making a complaint can be difficult, and ensure that complainants know that their views are valued and respected.
- Ensure that this policy and information on how to make a comment, compliment or complaint is readily available to all users of our services.
- Provide support to complainants to express their views, included providing support to complete a form.
- Provide feedback to complainants in a way that is understandable to them.
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with and responded to quickly.
- Ensure that all comments and compliments are passed on to the relevant teams.
- Ensure that comments, compliments and complaints are systematically reviewed through an internal audit process and that learning is disseminated to the staff team.
- Ensure that an overview of comments, compliments and complaints is shared with the Board of Trustees with any identifying details removed.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that data is treated respectfully in line with the Data Protection Policy.

A comment is....a personal opinion or belief, feedback or remark expressed by a service user.
A compliment is.....a statement of positive recognition or praise for a service or individual. Where appropriate staff may acknowledge compliments.
A complaint is....an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Project’s services, and can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

Comments

Service Users and other stakeholders are welcome to make comments to staff members as part of their participation in any of our services. Service Users and other stakeholders are invited to record their comments on our 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' form. These comments can help us to learn more about service users' views and thoughts on our services.

If a 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' form is completed on behalf of an individual by a staff member, the staff member will ask for consent to process the information through the Comments, Compliments and Complaints procedure as part of the discussion.

(Electronic forms are located in General\Policies\06 Associated Forms).

Comments must be passed on to the Head of Department Where a response is requested, this will be dealt with as general correspondence by the Head of Department.

Compliments

Service Users and other stakeholders are welcome to make compliments to staff members as part of their participation in any of our services. Service Users and other stakeholders are invited to record their compliments on our 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' form.

If a 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' form is completed on behalf of an individual by a staff member, the staff member will ask for consent to process the information through the Comments, Compliments and Complaints procedure as part of the discussion.

Compliments must be passed on to the relevant Head of Department who will record on their department log. Where a response is requested, this will be dealt with as general correspondence by the Head of Department.

Complaints

The Springfield Project aims to provide an effective complaints procedure that is focused on:

- Listening to and understanding the views of the complainant, and recognising the importance of their complaint.
- An early and satisfactory resolution to complaints.
- Providing feedback to the complainant with details of the investigation and resolution.
- Continually improving the service, we offer through reviewing and learning from all feedback.

Procedures for receiving a complaint

Complaints may be received verbally in person or by telephone, or in written form by letter or e-mail.

Verbal complaints may be made by telephone to 0121 777 2722 and should be passed on to the most senior staff member present within the relevant department. Where it is unclear which department the complaint relates to, the complaint should be dealt with by the most senior member of staff on site. Complaints may be received through any other contact details available to the complainant.

Best practice for the person initially receiving the complaint is to:

- Thank and acknowledge the individual for their complaint.
- Initially listen and then explain that a record of the complaint must be made.
- Take the name, address and telephone number of the complainant and their relationship to the organisation i.e. parent, visitor
- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Inform them of the Comments, Compliments and Complaints (CCC) Policy and procedures and if possible, give them a copy. The policy will inform them what will happen next and how long this will take.
- If required, ask the complainant to send a written account using the CCC form or by letter so that this can be recorded in their own words.
- Promptly forward the complaint to the appropriate manager who is available at that time.
- A complaint should normally be submitted in writing within 28 days of the incident in question. It is easier for us to investigate complaints if there is no delay in receiving the complaint.
- An acknowledgement should be sent to the person who submitted the complaint advising them of the date a response will be sent to them.
- Written complaints may be sent to the Springfield Project and passed to the relevant Head of Department who will record on their department log. Details of any complaints should be recorded quarterly on the central log.
- If a form is completed on behalf of an individual by a member of staff following a telephone conversation, the staff member will ask for permission/consent to process the information through the CCC procedure as part of the discussion.

Informal Comments and Complaints

All complainants must be made aware of their right to follow the formal complaints procedure. At times service users may be satisfied that their concerns have been heard, and they may not wish to pursue a complaint formally or for the formal complaints policy to be followed. In this circumstance the person receiving the complaint will make a written record of the informal complaint and their response to the complainant. Details of the complaint will be passed on to the relevant The Head of Department will then make a judgement of any action required on a result of the information received.

It is important that we learn from complaints, including those expressed informally.

Complaints Procedure

There are two stages to the complaints procedure where a formal complaint is made.

Stage 1

The relevant Head of Department will consider the complaint and allocate an investigating officer where appropriate. The investigating officer will complete an investigation and a response will be sent to the complainant within 10 working days.

Stage 2

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they should make this known in writing to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and this should be done within 10 working days of them receiving the stage 1 response.

A Review Panel will be convened to consider the complaint, consisting of the CEO, an impartial or neutral member of the Senior Leadership Team, and a Project Board member. An appropriate note-taker will also be appointed.

Steps will be taken to ensure neutral management of the process. Where the CEO has dealt with the initial complaint or if the complaint is regarding the CEO, the Chair (or vice Chair) of Trustees will be approached to manage the process.

In advance of the meeting, the Panel will receive copies of the complaint, the investigation report and other relevant documentation. Further information may be requested.

The Panel will meet with the complainant and the Manager who dealt with the complaint.

The complainant has the right to be accompanied by a friend or family member. The Panel should usually meet within ten working days of the request for a panel being received.

The CEO or Senior Leadership Team member will prepare a report outlining the action recommended by the Panel, and their reasons, including any remedies proposed and inform the complainant of the outcome in writing within 5 days of the decision being reached.

The COO will retain documentation from all levels of the process on file.

Ofsted

Any parent wishing to complain about the childcare provided by the Springfield Project may complain directly to:

- *The National Complaints Team
Ofsted National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD*

Early Education Entitlement (EEE)

Any parent not satisfied their child has received their EEE in the correct way can email:

earlyeducation@birmingham.gov.uk

Staff Complaints

If staff wish to make an internal complaint related to service provision, they should address this with their supervisor in the first instance. If they are not satisfied with the response, they may follow the same process as above. If a staff member has a complaint that relates to their job role, they must follow the Grievance Policy and Procedures. Staff may submit feedback by way of comments and compliments using the same process as service users.

Monitoring and Accountability

Heads of Department will provide quarterly reports regarding comments, compliments and complaints to the Senior Leadership team.

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring complaints and reporting to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

Where complaints relate to the Birmingham Forward Steps Children's Centre service, information will be

shared with Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust as required.

Related Policies: Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding, Data Protection, Confidentiality & Information Sharing Policy, Grievance Policy.

Policy approved:	
Policy last reviewed: March 2026	
Responsibility	Chief Operating Officer
Procedure	In partnership with the Senior Leadership Team
Timing	Next review March 2029 unless legislation changes