

## COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

### Introduction

Connections in Mind is committed to providing an excellent service to the people we work with, working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We have developed a Complaints Policy and Procedure that explains our approach to receiving complaints.

### Our Aim

Connections in Mind aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve the services that we provide is by listening and responding to the views of our students, parents and professionals and in particular responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

### We aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a quick response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially;
- we will respond in an appropriate way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology or information on any action taken;
- we will learn from complaints and use them to improve the work we do;

Connections in Mind recognises that many concerns raised will be informal, and we aim to deal with these quickly. In the first instance we would expect any complaint to be raised directly with the member our team concerned. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed

### Definition



# Connections in Mind

Helping children succeed

- A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our services; whether justified or not; with Connections in Mind or with a member of our team, that relates to Connections in Mind and that requires a formal response

## Purpose

- Connections in Mind's complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

## Connections in Mind's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take appropriate action if required;

## The complainant's responsibility is to:

- raise their concerns promptly and directly with the person concerned and if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure as detailed;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow Connections in Mind a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter as detailed in the formal complaints procedure;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Connections in Mind's control

## Monitoring and Reporting

Connections in Mind board of Directors will regularly receive a report of complaints made and their resolution.

## Confidentiality

- Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Connections in Mind maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

### Principles of the Complaints Policy

- The Connections in Mind Complaints policy is based on the principle of a three- stage process (as detailed in the Complaints Procedure).
- The Complaints Policy will apply to all the services that Connections in Mind provides.
- If at any time during the investigation of a complaint matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until those investigations are concluded. Similarly, the complaints procedure should be suspended if a complainant is actively seeking legal redress.
- Where a complaint is against a member of staff they should be informed of the support services available to them.
- A member of the Board of Directors will be informed of the receipt of a Stage 1 formal complaint. A complete record of the entire process should be kept. A copy of all reports, transcripts of interviews and other relevant information should be forwarded to the Director for immediate review one of our supervisors.
- Connections in Mind may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where a member of the Senior Management Team deem the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious.
- When appealing against a previous decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

Any compliments and complaints should be passed to a student's Coach in the first instance. Complaints sent directly to the Directors, will be passed to the relevant operational member of staff to investigate. A more detailed guide for students, parents or guardians of a student is detailed below.

## HOW TO RAISE A COMPLIMENT OR COMPLAINT

### A Guide to Raising Compliments for a Student, Parent or Guardian of a Student

If you are a student or a parent/guardian of a student and you would like to acknowledge the support that you or your son/daughter has received whilst working with Connections in Mind, please let us know. You can contact the Coach directly. They will ensure that the relevant staff within the organisation are made aware .

### A Guide to Raising any Issues

If you are a student or parent/guardian of a student and you are unhappy about anything regarding Connections in Mind, it is very important that we hear about this.

- In the first instance, you should raise the issue with the Coach, who is operationally closest to the issue.
- As a next step, please discuss your concerns with the Coach's Supervisor. You can obtain this information from the Coach.

Response time: acknowledgement within five working days;

Response following further investigation; a further five working days

- If it is a complaint about an aspect of coaching, the Supervisor will refer you to a Director. Directors are responsible for managing specific subject areas and Coaching approaches. The Directors will ensure a full investigation is carried out.

## Formal Complaints

If your complaint is serious and you wish to make a formal complaint, please use our formal complaints procedure below:

- Put your complaint in writing to the Director.
- An acknowledgement will be sent within five working days and you may be asked to submit further details of the complaint.
- Following our internal investigation, the Director will communicate the outcome to you in writing or on a phone call, if the complainant is happy with the latter approach and believes that this is appropriate. The letter or report will also be sent to those involved.

This response will be made within three weeks of the acknowledgement of the complaint.