



Making the difference

Complaints Procedure



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Children's Complaints

All staff are aware of the importance of listening to children and opportunities are made to talk and listen to them. Children are encouraged to communicate with staff. Staff will take on an advocacy role, where appropriate, particularly in the case of children with more severe physical difficulties who are unable to voice their own views clearly.

A child would normally report any complaints to their class teacher, therapist or special support assistant at Vbranch House. Any member of staff may find that they are confided in by a child and they will bring that information to the attention of the appropriate named person – the Head of Therapy for Outpatient and the Head of Education for a school pupil.

If a child makes a complaint that is judged to be serious this is treated as a formal complaint and recorded on CPOMS and reported to the appropriate head of service. On CPOMS the details of the complaint and the action to be taken are recorded.

Parent's Complaints

Vbranch House has a formal complaints procedure which is designed to give parents or guardians clear guidance on how to resolve an issue whilst offering, as far as is possible, the opportunity for resolution of the complaint *independently* of the staff involved. The Complaints Procedure is outlined below:

First Action

If a parent has a problem with something happening in their child's class or with their child's therapy they are encouraged in the first instance to speak to the Class Teacher, Early Years Foundation Teacher or Therapist as the partnership between the parents, the child and the charity is very important to the quality of school life and the therapy clinics. If the problem is of a nature which makes such a discussion with the Class Teacher, Early Years Foundation Teacher or Therapist difficult, parents should make an appointment to speak to the Head of Therapy or the Head of Education.

Second Action

The parents may not feel that they have had a satisfactory explanation or insufficient action has been taken to deal with the problem they have raised with the Head of Therapy or the Head of Education. In the first instance they are encouraged to bring the matter to the attention of the Chief Executive. This is **not** a mandatory step. If parents are not happy with the explanation or action taken by the Head of Therapy or the Head of Education they may immediately write to the Chair of Trustees (if the complaint is about therapy) or to the Chairman of Governors if the complaint is about a school matter (Care of Vbranch House

School). The Chairman of Trustees or Chairman of Governors will use the Management Committee (which comprises of more than 3 people) to investigate the complaint and will ensure that a person independent to the management of the charity joins the committee for the hearing. In this the Management Committee may take the evidence of the Head of Therapies or the Head of Education but the service head concerned will NOT be involved in formulating a response to the complaint. The Management Committee is empowered to deal with the complaint to avoid unnecessary delays between the time the complaint is raised and the next scheduled meeting of the full Board of Trustees or Governors and will consider the complaint within two weeks of first notice. The Management Committee will invite the parent making the complaint together with a companion (if the parent wishes to be accompanied) to make the complaint to the Committee in person. The complaint together with the proposed resolution must be reported in full to the next Trustees' or Governors' meeting which will consider the complaint within six weeks of first notice. If the Chairman of Trustees or Governors is not satisfied with the proposed response he or she may unilaterally refer the complaint to the next full meeting of the Board of Trustees which will consider the complaint within ten weeks of first notice. If the matter is not reported to the Board of Trustees then the resolution proposed by the Board of Governors is deemed final. If the matter is referred to the Board of Trustees then the resolution proposed by the Board of Trustees is deemed final. Throughout the process written records will be kept and held securely and treated as confidential. The written findings of the relevant committee or Board will be made available to all principals involved in the hearing, including the complainant, but any wider distribution will be restricted on a need-to-know basis.