



Rainbow Horses

Learning Centre CIC

Complaints Procedure

Our Complaints Procedure is available for commissioners, learners, learners' relatives, centre staff, volunteers and employers and describes what a complaint is, and what must happen when one occurs.

Rainbow Horses Learning Centre operates an open 'no-blame' culture where staff are supported to see 'mistakes' as learning opportunities. We encourage complaints from all bodies in order to enable us to improve our service.

This procedure does not apply to Safeguarding concerns. The Safeguarding Policy must be followed in these circumstances.

The 'Responsible Person for Rainbow Horses is: Sue coombes.

DEFINITIONS

A complaint is:

- Any expression of dissatisfaction or discontent about Rainbow Horses Learning centre, whether this is justified or not
- This can be verbal, written or any other form of communication, either from the person who is dissatisfied or by another person acting on their behalf
- A person might complain if they feel:
 - They have not been provided with an acceptable standard of help or support
 - They have been treated unfairly or discriminated against
 - Someone associated with Rainbow Horses has behaved unacceptably towards them or other people
 - There has been a breach of the Rainbow Horses standards of behaviour or rules.

Points to note:

- A person may not describe their concern as a "complaint", saying instead that they have a problem, concern or worry
- If in doubt it is important to ask the person if they wish to make a complaint
- If the person does not wish to make a complaint, it is still important to seek a resolution to their concern.

Written Complaints.

If a person wishes to make a written complaint this can be either

- sent by email to Sue Coombes at: sue.coombes@rainbow-horses.co.uk,
- sent by email to another director at: armandbrevig@yahoo.com, or
- sent by post to our registered office at: 7 Top Road, Ruddington, Nottingham NG11 6HQ addressed to either Sue Coombes or Armand Brevig.

PROCEDURE

The person who first becomes aware of the complaint must:

- Ensure that (if safe to do so) immediate actions are taken to prevent any potential harm to people
- Verbally acknowledge the complaint
- Report the complaint to the Responsible Person at the centre
- Report the complaint using the Complaint Reporting system as soon as possible.

The Responsible Person must:

- Confirm all necessary immediate actions for people's well-being and safety have been taken
- Confirm that the complaint is not related to Child or Adult Safeguarding concerns (if it is, the Safeguarding Policy **must** be followed)
- Help the person who reported the complaint to complete the necessary actions
- Assess whether the complaint is serious
- Seek advice if needed
- Consider the effect of the complaint on people, and ensure they receive the support and information they need
- Ensure that information about the complaint is shared only with people who need to know
- Acknowledge the complaint in writing, explaining the process that will be followed, within 7 days
- Investigate the complaint, or arrange for an investigation to be undertaken, in line with the following stages.

- **STAGE 1 – INFORMAL INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION**

There will be an informal investigation within 7 working days.

- This may be undertaken by the person receiving the complaint or the Responsible Person
- Every effort should be made to resolve the complaint quickly and informally
- Key tasks include listening, checking facts, providing information and considering possible outcomes
- Outcomes include offering an apology, providing an explanation, changing practices
- The outcome of Stage 1 will be communicated in writing to the complainant, and a record of the outcome will be entered into the Complaints Book (including whether the complaint is resolved at Stage 1 or progresses to Stage 2).

- **STAGE 2 – FORMAL INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION**

- Within 14 working days

- If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 1 then the complainant has the right to have the complaint formally investigated.
- This may be undertaken by the Responsible Person (if they did not handle Stage 1) or another appointed person.
- The appointed person will:
- Meet the complainant to:
 - Clarify the specifics of the complaint
 - Assess why the complainant remains dissatisfied
 - Clarify what resolution is being sought.
 - Investigate matters and interview other parties as appropriate
 - Assess whether the complaint is justified
 - Put in place and implement a plan to:
 - Resolve the issues arising as a result of the complaint
 - Minimise the risk of a similar complaint happening in future
 - Consider what, if any, communication is needed including funders and the media.
- The outcome of Stage 2 will be communicated in writing to the complainant, and a record of the outcome will be entered into the Complaints Book (including whether the complaint is resolved at Stage 2 or progresses to Stage 3).

- **STAGE 3 – GOVERNING BODY OR INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND RESOLUTION**

Within 28 working days

- If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 2 then the complainant has the right to have the complaint investigated by a Rainbow Horses Director or by an independent person
- Following the investigation a meeting will be held by the RH Directors to consider the facts, and review the conduct and findings of Stage 2
- The complainant may attend the relevant part of the meeting, and bring someone with them for support if they wish to (this must not be a solicitor or legal representative).
- The RH Directors will make a decision about whether the outcome of Stage 2 was fair and whether any other actions are needed to resolve the complaint.
- If necessary, the RH Directors will put in place and implement a plan to:
 - Resolve the issues arising as a result of the complaint
 - Minimise the risk of a similar complaint happening in future
 - Consider what, if any, communication is needed, including funders and the media.

- The outcome of Stage 3 will be communicated in writing to the complainant, and a record of the outcome will be entered into the Complaints Book.
- The RH Directors may, on occasions, conclude that a complaint has been made maliciously. In this case any investigation will be ended, a record will be entered into the Complaints Book, and the complainant will be advised in writing that there the complaint has not been upheld.

Other duties of the Responsible Person:

- Ensure people know how to complain
- Ensure the person investigating a complaint is independent from the concerns raised in the complaint
- Ensure that personal information is not shared with anyone who does not have a right to that information
- Ensure that information is shared with the relevant agency if appropriate to do so
- Ensure that records are confidentially destroyed 3 years after the last contact with the complainant unless:
 - The record contains details of a Children's or Adult's Safeguarding concern, or
 - The record is a Stage 2 or Stage 3 formal complaint, and
 - In each case, the record is kept for 6 years from the date of the ruling on the complaint.
- Arrange for complaints that are made anonymously to be investigated using the Serious Incidents Procedure
- Give due consideration to the support that may be needed to all parties involved in the circumstances leading up to, and during the investigation of, the complaint. The person(s) who is the subject of the complaint has the right to appeal against the complaint. This appeal will be heard by the Directors. The person has the right to union representation where appropriate

LEARNING

It is important to learn from complaints:

- At an appropriate future date, review the Complaint Book to act on any lessons learnt (at least annually), including the effects of the reasons for the complaint and the investigation has had on the complainant and others associated with Rainbow Horses
- The review will be undertaken by the RH Directors.
- Where the person who made the complaint considers that it has not properly been addressed, this should be discussed with the Responsible Person and recorded in the Complaints Book
- A plan to implement actions arising from lessons learnt will be overseen by RH Directors.

LINK WITH SERIOUS INCIDENTS

It may be appropriate to use this procedure to investigate a complaint. If the scope of the investigation into the serious incident does not include all the elements of the complaint, then the Complaints Procedure must be followed.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

People involved with Rainbow Horses Learning Centre will be made aware of this procedure and where they can find it. They will receive training, as appropriate to their involvement, in:

- Their roles and responsibilities,
- How to use this procedure,

- Lessons learnt and actions arising.

Reviewed September 2023

Signed Sue Coombes

Next Review due September 2024

**COMPLAINTS REPORTING SYSTEM
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

Date Form Received:

Name of Responsible Person:

Immediate actions taken following receipt of the complaint:

Include actions taken to support the people involved

What Action By Who Time and Date

What further actions will be taken?

Action Plan, to include date of Review

What Action By Who By When

Signed: