

Complaints Procedure

1. Policy Statement

At Time Together Contact Centre we aim to provide the highest quality service for all our children and families by creating an environment that is warm, welcoming and inclusive for all. Our intention is to work in partnership with the children and families who use our service and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting at any time.

We do however recognise, we may get things wrong and you have the right to make a complaint.

We view complaints as an opportunity to learn to improve our services, as well as a change to put things right for the person who has made the complaint.

If you have a complaint about Time Together Contact Centre, we would like to sort it out as soon as possible.

In the event you feel the need for making a complaint we politely request you do so in the following manner:

2. Making an Informal Complaint or Raising a Concern

- If you feel able and have a concern about any aspect of Time Together Contact Centre, you are always welcome to and should firstly try to discuss the concern with the Centre Co-Ordinator or Team Leader on duty on the day.
- If you prefer, you can make an appointment with the Centre Co-Ordinator and they will try and sort the matter out.

If you are not satisfied or do not wish to seek an informal solution, you may make a formal complaint.

3. Making a Formal Complaint

There are 2 stages to Time Together Contact Centre's complaints procedure:

3.1 Stage 1

- Your complaint should be **put in writing** and send it to the Complaints Officer, Kelly Welch, by email at complaints@timetogethercontactcentre.co.uk.
- Your complaint should clearly state what you are unhappy about, and give details about what has happened, why something has caused you concern and, if applicable, what you would like to happen to put things right.
- The Complaints Officer will acknowledge your complaint within **7 working days**. The reply will set out:
 - (a) The complaint to ensure it has been understood;
 - (b) Who is dealing with it;
 - (c) When you can expect a reply.
- Your complaint will be investigated by the designated person, and, if it relates to a specific person or persons, they will be informed and given an opportunity to respond. If appropriate, the person investigating may clarify or seek

additional information from you, relevant documentation at Time Together, or may speak to any witnesses to events.

- The Complaints Officer may investigate the facts of the complaint themselves and they may review all necessary paperwork of the complaint and may speak to the person who made the complaint and staff members the complaint relates to.
- If possible, you will receive a reply to your complaint within **4 weeks**. However, if this is not possible for any reason, a progress report should be sent to you with a new date when the investigation should be completed.
- The reply will set out
 - (a) The nature of your complaint;
 - (b) Action taken to investigate it;
 - (c) The conclusions from the investigation and any action taken as a result of your complaint.
 - (d) It will also explain what you should do if you are not happy with the decision and how to progress your complaint to stage 2.
- The Complaints Officer will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of **Stage 1**.

3.2 Stage 2

- **If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2.**
- A request to escalate to Stage 2, must be made within 14 days of receiving the response from Stage 1 and be addressed to the Directors of Time Together Contact Centre who are Sophie Box and Sarah Wilcox. **Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.**
- The Directors may investigate the facts of the complaint themselves; they may review all the paperwork of the complaint or may speak to the person who looked into the complaint at stage 1.
- The Directors will acknowledge your complaint **within 7 working days** and will tell you when you can expect a reply. You will also be invited to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint further.
- If possible, you will receive a reply to your complaint within **4 weeks**. However, if this is not possible for any reason, a progress report should be sent to you with a new date when the investigation should be completed.
- The Directors will consider the complaint and can:
 - (a) uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
 - (b) dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
 - (c) If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, they will decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint or where appropriate, recommend changes to the centre's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

- A written decision will be sent to you within **7 working days of their investigation being complete.**
- The Decision of the complaint will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Time Together Contact Centre will take to resolve the complaint.
- ***The decision taken at this stage 2 is final.***

If the outcome following Stage 2 is still unsatisfactory, then complaints to NACCC can also be made.

4. Complaints to the NACCC re Complaints Policy

Time Together Contact Centre is a member of the National Association of Child Contact centre.

If after the above procedure has been carried out and you are unsatisfied with the response then you may write to NACCC at the following address:

contact@naccc.org.uk.

However, it should be noted that the role of NACCC in such cases will be to facilitate a satisfactory conclusion to the complaint rather than to conduct a formal investigation.

The form must only be submitted to NACCC after the enquiry has been fully exhausted and/or concluded by the centre and within a twelve-week timescale of the conclusion of stage 2.

Alternatively, the complainant might choose to complain to the organisation that made the referral to that service (Eg. Cafcass, FPAS, & The Family Court Welfare Service, Local Authorities, Courts, or other referring bodies and/or LADO and the ICO, whichever is applicable). They may also wish to seek legal advice.

If the complainant decides to escalate their concern to NACCC and stages 1 and 2 are complete, they email NACCC at: contact@naccc.org.uk.

5. Complaints to the NACCC re Time Together Contact Centre

As a membership organisation NACCC has no responsibility for the staffing or day to day running of member centres, however they do advise, support and accredit centres and require member centres to work to the highest standards.

If you do not consider this is standard is being met by Time Together Contact Centre you are entitled to inform NACCC of this at: contact@naccc.org.uk.

6. Variations to the complaint's procedure

The Centre Co-Ordinator may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest or to ensure an independent investigation, for example.

7. Complaints Record

Written records of all complaints and how they were dealt with, including any written legal or insurance responses, will be held by the Centre Co-ordinator in a confidential file.

8. Monitoring and Learning

Complaints will be recorded and reported to the next meeting of the Management Committee.

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends or need for further action to improve the service.