

## Complaints Policy

### Introduction

Extratime is committed to providing an excellent service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. Extratime recognises the value of the opinions and views of the children, young people, parents, carers and other stakeholders who use our services, which will sometimes be made as an expression of concern or in the form of a complaint. We encourage feedback and aim to make it easy for service users to raise concerns and make complaints. This policy provides a framework for handling concerns and complaints.

All service users will be given clear information about this policy and procedure on request, with guidance on how to raise a concern or make a complaint.

### Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of Extratime's work (whether justified or not) that requires a formal response.

### Aims of the Policy

Extratime wishes to encourage service users to say when they think something about our service is not right or does not meet their expectations. Extratime does not ask that complaints be made in any prescribed way and will respond to complaints and concerns however they are raised, e.g. verbally or in writing. Extratime 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 service users, partners and stakeholders and in particular responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

It is recognised that some people may wish to raise a concern without labelling it a complaint and that many concerns are best raised and dealt with more informally. Extratime will still aim to respond to more informal concerns quickly and effectively, and to learn any lessons from such concerns. Extratime may therefore still use the procedure outlined in this policy in some cases where a service user has raised a concern but asked for it to not be treated as a formal complaint.

Some people may feel more comfortable dealing with a person who is not directly associated with the service they are using. For this reason, a member of staff from another part of the organisation or a member of the Extratime Management Committee can be made available to any service user for help and guidance. This is separate from the option in the complaints procedure to ask the Chief Executive or Trustees to review the response to a complaint.

All reasonable steps will be taken to resolve the individual issue and, where appropriate, an apology will be offered and information given on any action taken. If there are reasons why Extratime is unable to resolve the issue as the service user would wish, for example if funding levels do not allow us to offer the level of service sought, a clear and transparent explanation will be given.

Extratime will embrace complaints and concerns as an opportunity to improve the quality of what we offer and the way we deliver our services. Appropriate action will be taken on lessons learned from individual complaints so that issues do not recur or the service is improved.

The confidentiality of the nature of the concern or complaint will be respected by Extratime. In the event that the circumstances giving rise to the complaint are such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Support and guidance will be available to staff to ensure that this policy is understood and that agreed procedures are followed.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Service users are encouraged, in the first instance, to raise their concerns or complaints with the relevant Venue Lead or Supervisor leading the service. However, it is recognised that they may prefer to discuss the matter with someone more senior or not associated with the service. In these instances, other Extratime staff that can be contacted include:

- Brett Preston, Senior Venue Lead (brett.preston@extratimebrighton.org.uk)
- Rebecca Jenkins, HR Officer (rebecca.jenkins@extratimebrighton.org.uk)
- Sam Price, CEO (sam.price@extratimebrighton.org.uk)

All Extratime staff will treat concerns and complaints with care and respect to the individual. Where a complaint is against a member of staff, volunteer or trustee, they should be informed of the support available to them.

Within five working days of raising a complaint or concern, the complainant will be contacted to explain the procedure that will be followed and an indication of when they can expect a response from Extratime.

All complaints will be thoroughly investigated by an appropriate member of staff; this may include staff members from another part of the organisation. As soon as reasonably possible following the completion of the investigation, a more formal response outlining the findings and any actions will be sent to the complainant.

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.

If the service user is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint or the way in which it has been handled, they can ask for it to be reviewed by the Chief Executive. Should the service user wish to take the matter to a further level they can approach the Extratime Trustees.

Where a complaint includes a concern about safeguarding or that action to safeguard has not been taken in accordance with Extratime's procedures, this should be dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and as outlined in Extratime's Safeguarding Policy. Alternatively, an individual can contact the council's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the NSPCC if they do not wish to contact Extratime directly regarding a safeguarding issue.

Where a complaint or concern is raised with Extratime but proves to relate to another organisation or service, the complainant will be offered information about how to take the matter up with the relevant body.

### **Recording and Reporting**

All stages of the handling of an individual complaint should be properly documented and recorded. This includes notes from investigation meetings, correspondence, a summary of the investigation outcome, the response given to the complainant and any other relevant information.

A Complaints & Concerns Log (Appendix 1) should be completed and kept up to date for every complaint and concern raised, outlining:

- Date of complaint/concern
- Name of person raising complaint/concern
- Summary of complaint/concern
- Date of initial response
- Investigating Lead
- Actions taken to investigate complaint/concern
- Investigation findings and conclusion
- Recommendations and actions
- Date of formal response
- Any other actions
- List of supporting documents/information

**Making a Complaint to Ofsted**

Extratime hope that any concerns or complaints would in the first instance be brought to our attention as outlined in this policy. However, any service user can submit a complaint to Ofsted about Extratime at any time. Ofsted will consider and investigate all complaints and can be contacted at:

Post: The National Complaints Team, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD  
 Telephone: 0300 123 1231 (general enquiries)  
 Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents)

**Document version & review:**

Date Written	Version Number	Written By	Date approved by Management Committee
October 2017	1	Rebecca Jenkins, HR Officer	August 2017
<b>Date of next review:</b> October 2020			

## Appendix 1

### Extratime Complaints & Concerns Record

This form should be completed by the Investigating Lead to record all complaints/concerns received by Extratime and the action taken.

Date of complaint/concern	
Name of person raising complaint/concern	
Summary of complaint/concern	
Date of initial response	
Investigating Lead	
Actions taken to investigate complaint	
Investigation findings and conclusion	
Recommendations and actions	
Date of formal response	
Any other actions	
List of supporting documents/information	

Signed (Investigating Lead):

Date:

*A signed copy of the Complaints & Concerns Record and all supporting documents/information should be saved in the relevant Sharepoint folder.*