Home-Start Epsom, Ewell and Banstead (hereafter called Home-Start)

Complaints Policy and Procedure

POLICY STATEMENT

Home-Start (HSEEB) is committed to developing the quality of its services. The Complaints Procedure enables referrers, other stakeholders (e.g. volunteers) and families being supported by Home-Start (HSEEB) to make complaints about the service and to have their complaints considered.

A complaint, in the context of the Procedure, means: *'the expression of dissatisfaction with the service provided and the wish to have that dissatisfaction recorded and/or considered for improvement of the service and for the removal of dissatisfaction'.*

PROCEDURE

Who this procedure does not relate to

a) Employees of Home-Start: The Complaints Procedure is separate and distinct from the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures which enables employees to raise grievances in connection with their condition of employment and other employment-related matters.
b) The Disciplinary Procedure: is used by the employer when an employee may be in breach of the terms of employment. However, an investigation of complaints may lead to disciplinary issues.

Responsibility of staff and volunteers
Home-Start staff and volunteers need to be sensitive and helpful to the complainant, and those acting on their behalf, who express a concern. This is part of Home-Start's commitment to a high quality service. Staff should give information about the Complaints Procedure and help complainants to understand and use it.

Staff and volunteers must advise anyone who feels that they may have been subject to any discrimination that they also have the right to use the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. **There should be no delay in giving this information since there is a three month time limit for making a submission for a claim under the Act**. However, it is up to the person concerned to decide whether to use that process and it is advisable for them to take specialist advice before proceeding.

The senior worker is responsible for ensuring the smooth working of the Complaints Procedure.

If a complaint is related to the Senior Manager, a designated trustees will be the main point of contact until after an investigation is complete.

Time Frame and Recording Requirements

1	Anyone wishing to make a complaint will be informed about this procedure and will be sent a complaint form (appendix 1).
2	If a letter of complaint has been received this will be attached to a complaint form.
3	All complaints received will be acknowledged **within 5 working days** and a copy sent to the chair of the trustee board. All complaints will be recorded on the Complaints record form (Appendix 2) and retained.
4	Once the complaint has been acknowledged it will be investigated. Investigators are appointed and will normally meet **within 15 working days** of complaint being acknowledged. The timescale of resolving the complaint will be confirmed to the complainant as aiming to provide a response **within 25 working days**. Investigation commences.
5	Snr Manager discusses complaint with chairperson – result of investigation sent to complainant and recorded with complaint.
6	If complainant still dissatisfied - meeting of trustees called **within 15 working days** of receipt - final response sent after meeting. Appendix 3 record completed and retained.
7	The trustee board will be notified of all complaints and all follow up actions

This policy adopted: 22.01.2020

Date policy to be reviewed: 22.01.2023

Signed (Chair) **Name: Briony Thomas**

A**ppendix 1**

To be completed by the complainant (or attached to complainants letter of complaint). Please note if the complainant is being assisted please confirm that you have their permission to make this complaint on their behalf. See below.

Home-Start	Complaint No.:
Name and Address of Complainant	If acting on behalf of the complainant please give your name and address as well as that of the person you are assisting
Name:	Name:
Address, including post code:	Address, including post code:
Telephone No:	Telephone No:
I give permission for …… to make this complaint on my behalf: Signed……	I confirm I have permission to make this complaint on behalf of …….. Relationship to complainant: Signed ……
Details of complaint (expand or continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	

Appendix 2

To be completed by the relevant person in the local Home-Start (usually the Home-Start manager or senior organiser/co-ordinator).

Home-Start _____	Complaint No.:
Name and Address of Complainant	
Content of Complaint	
Unhappy about staff or volunteer's attitude	
Lack of care and attention by staff or volunteers	
Racial discrimination	
Lack of response to requests or messages	
Other (specify)	
Stage One	Dates
Complaint received	
Complaint acknowledged	
Complaint recorded	
Copy to chairperson	
Written response sent to Complainant	
Stage Two (if applicable)	Dates (*or name)
Reply by complainant to response received	
Reply acknowledged	
Reply recorded	
Copy to chairperson	
Investigation commenced	
Name(s) of person(s) investigating complaint	*
Investigation completed, outcome recorded	
Written response sent to Complainant	

Appendix 3

Stage 3: To be completed if complainant still dissatisfied after outcome of investigation: Meeting of trustees - final response sent to complainant after meeting.

Home-Start	Complaint No.:
Name and Address of Complainant	
Written dissatisfaction acknowledged	
Written dissatisfaction recorded	
Copy to chairperson	
Special meeting - notices sent	
Special meeting - date held	
Written response sent to Complainant	