



COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY STATEMENT

The Bexley Moorings Project views comments & complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve our services for the future and to put things right for the individual, family or organisation involved.

1. Bexley Moorings Project believes that young people, their families and other stakeholders have the right to comment on our services and we will help them to do so. We will offer information on complaining and complimenting the service in ways that are clear and accessible to all regardless of age, disability gender, ethnicity, belief or sexual orientation.
2. We will respect comments and complaints, make changes where necessary and respond to the person making the comment appropriately. We will treat complaints and compliments as confidential.
3. Making a complaint will not harm or prejudice the service that is given to the complainant.
4. We will enable people making a complaint to access a system that is transparent and fair. People will be able to appeal against decisions made about complaints.
5. We aim to deal with concerns and complaints efficiently, appropriately and investigated within the agreed timeframe.
6. Appropriate action in light of the outcome of a complaint may include an apology, explanation and update of resulting action.
7. We believe that encouraging young people's comments and showing them that they are respected helps to make Bexley Moorings Project an organisation that safeguards children and young people.
8. We will also involve young people, their families and other stakeholders in evaluating our services.
9. All Bexley Moorings Project's workers, including volunteers, have a duty to follow these procedures.
10. Bexley Moorings Project will involve its stakeholders in reviewing and revising this document regularly.

Responding to complaints

- All complaints should be acknowledged within five working days.
- All complaints should be treated as confidential.
- The procedure for responding to complaints has up to three stages.
- Stages in the following may be jumped if certain stages are not appropriate.

Stage One:

- a. Workers, in liaison with their Line Managers and other colleagues if appropriate, should attempt to respond to the complaint informally. This would be appropriate for complaints where it has been made clear that only an acknowledgement or apology is required, or where a change to service provision can be made that satisfies the person complaining. If there is any doubt, the worker involved should follow up the response to the complaint to check whether the person complaining is satisfied with the outcome.

Stage Two:

- a. If the complaint cannot be resolved by Stage One, the person complaining can request that their complaint is formally investigated. Bexley Moorings Chief Executive must be informed. A senior member of staff will talk to the person complaining and all workers involved. They will write a short report outlining the circumstances and possible courses of action, including any actions suggested by the person complaining. Bexley Moorings Chief Executive will write within 20 days of acknowledgement to the person complaining or invite them to a meeting and suggest a course of action.
- b. Contact and meetings with young people should be conducted in an age-appropriate manner, encouraging the young person to involve parents, an advocate and/or a friend in meetings and conversations. They should be given a choice of venues and told who will be involved in the process and what its outcomes may be.

Stage Three:

- a. If the person complaining is not happy with the response from Stage Two, their complaint and its investigation should be discussed at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees/ Management Committee. The person complaining should be informed of the date of this meeting and when they will be informed of its outcome. The Board/ Committee will write to them within 10 working days of the conclusion of the meeting outlining their conclusions and any actions to be taken.
- b. The response from the Board/ Committee should include the contact details of any independent bodies to which service user has recourse (such as the Local Authority). Information should be shared with external bodies at the service user's request.

11. If the person complaining is a service user, a note about their complaint should be added to their case notes only if their complaint is relevant to their future support e.g. if they have requested a change in support worker.
12. All complaints and their responses should be recorded and updated whilst internal or external investigations are ongoing. Records containing personal information should be destroyed within 3 months of investigations being resolved, but a version with identifying details removed should be made available to the Board of Trustees/ Management Committee. If documents are sent out of Bexley Moorings Project, copies should be retained whilst any external investigation is ongoing.
13. If a person makes a complaint which is found not to be justified, they will not be penalised and may continue to have full access to our services. Those repeatedly making unjustified complaints or making malicious complaints may have services withdrawn if this is felt necessary to protect their well-being, the safety of staff or the well-being of other stakeholders. This action should only be taken after discussion with Bexley Moorings Project's manager and other relevant workers and a letter explaining the reasons for this action should be sent to the service user.

Definitions

Comments

This includes complaints, compliments, suggestions and other comments on the service, a worker or organisation.

Worker

This includes paid and unpaid staff, volunteers and Trustees.

Stakeholders

Includes people of all ages using the service, other agencies, members of the public.

Related Policies and Procedures

1. Safeguarding policies and procedures
2. Confidentiality
3. Health and Safety

Signed:



Date:

27/11/24

Review Date:

Nov 27

