

## Children’s Complaints Policy

| Review History |                |                  |  |            |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|--|------------|
| Issue No       | Date of review | Changes made Y/N | If Y – provide details of changes made | Changed by |
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### 1. Introduction

At Sansaar, it is essential for children living in the homes to be aware of their right to voice concerns or dissatisfaction. We emphasize a transparent, robust, and responsive complaints system to ensure their well-being, safety, and trust.

### 2. Purpose

To ensure children at Sansaar homes can freely express concerns, have their complaints managed with utmost seriousness, and be updated on its progress.

### 3. Environment & Culture

- All children will be briefed about their rights to complain upon admission to the home.
- Staff will maintain a flexible and supportive attitude when handling complaints.
- Children will be educated about the role of the Children’s Rights Officer, offering an additional avenue for voicing complaints.
- Any retaliatory actions against a child for making a complaint is strictly prohibited.
- Individuals implicated in a complaint will not have the authority to manage or address that complaint.

### 4. Informal Complaint

- Minor concerns may be addressed promptly through negotiation and problem-solving.
- The child will be updated about the responsible individual, the complaint’s progression, and the expected timeframe for a response within two days.
- Every complaint, regardless of its nature, will be recorded in the child’s complaints chronology and the designated Complaints Book.
- The Registered Manager will be promptly notified of all complaints.
- Resolved complaints will be documented and sent to the homes manager.
- Unresolved complaints will transition to the formal stage.

## 5. Who can complain?

Various individuals can make complaints:

- Children and young people.
- Parents and carers
- Social workers.
- Placing authority.
- Employees of the home.
- Members of the public.

This policy will be provided on request to other agencies, professionals, relatives, and friends, who wish to make a complaint on behalf of a child.

We welcome complaints, we learn from them and use them to improve the service. We are always willing to listen and will do our utmost to resolve any concerns about the home or staff, if we are unable to resolve the complaint, we will explain how to take the complaint further. We will not discriminate or treat anyone any differently because they wish to complain.

## 6. Informal Process

If a child (or their family) is unhappy with the service provided; with individual care provided or with the attitude or behaviour of staff; or for any other reason; the person receiving the information will take the following action:

(At every stage, the person will be offered access to an advocate and/or interpreter if required).

- Check with the person that they feel comfortable speaking to them; or would they prefer someone else? Provide information regarding the availability of someone else on site, or who is contactable off site, at any time of day.
- We will ensure that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration other than, if the Home's Manager considers it appropriate, at the informal resolution stage only.
- If the problem is brought up by an adult, record the information in the complaints book, read it back to the person to ensure they have accurately recorded what the person wishes to say. Record the name and contact details.
- The member of staff receiving the information should try to resolve the problem immediately, if possible, e.g. lost property, transport not arriving. The member of staff should ensure they record the action taken, and check and record that the person is satisfied with the outcome.
- If the problem is brought up by a young person staff must ensure that it is appropriately recorded in the young person's Complaints book, as well as any action taken and the satisfaction of the child/young person with the outcome.

If the problem cannot be resolved immediately (within 24 hours) or is a serious matter, then:

- Staff should explain what happens next. Staff should give the complainant a summary of the Complaints Procedure and/or a complaints leaflet and go through it with them. Help (if appropriate) service users to make a complaint (e.g. filling an online complaint form - particularly when someone is not able to write).

- If the complainant speaks another language staff should make every effort to get their name, address, telephone number and the language they speak.
- In recording a complaint, staff should ask the complainant what the outcome is they are seeking. This may not always be possible to achieve but it helps to clarify the nature of the complaint.
- The complainant has the option of sending the complaint to the Registered Person.
- For the children and young people there are a variety of methods available i.e. communication techniques or formats appropriate to their level of understanding.

***See Appendix B***

## **7. Formal Complaint**

Stage 1.

- Once the Home's Manager (or appropriate manager if the complaints is against the Home's Manager) received a formal complaint they will:
- Contact the complainant to record the details of the complaint and acknowledge the complaint in writing within two working days.
- Look into the complaint, seeking to resolve problems asking for procedural guidance from the Complaints Manager, as necessary.
- Send a draft of the response letter to the host authority - and amend draft as necessary based on advice.
- Provide a final written response to the complainant within ten working days setting out the findings of the stage 1 problem solving process.
- Notify the host authority of any 'Learning Issues' for the Service which have been identified as part of the complaint.
- Ensure the complaint is fully documented and correspondence filed.

The complainant, if not satisfied, can progress the complaint to Stage 2 of the Complaints procedure.

Stage 2

- The complaint will be investigated by a manager not previously involved in the complaint and a Responsible individual (RI) or the IRO of the young person. They will respond in writing as soon as applicable, outlining their findings and recommendation to the social care team and Safeguarding/IRO); The IRO will take over to mediate an outcome of the complaint.

***See Appendix A***

## **8. Complaints associated with the Care Manager**

If the complaint relates to the Home's Manager, the member of staff must contact either:

- The Service Manager (9am - 5pm).
- The Responsible Individual.
- Manager from another home (when possible)
- The On-call supervisor.

The manager approached will follow the formal complaints process as detailed in section 3 above.

## 9. Training

All Staff members will undergo comprehensive training on:

- What constitutes a complaint.
- Supporting children in the complaint process.
- What the procedure is for dealing with an informal complaint in the homes and how it should be recorded.
- The procedure to be followed should a complaint not be resolved promptly by informal means, including who should be notified and the keeping of records.
- Handling and recording both informal and formal complaints.
- Addressing complaints from community members, such as neighbours.

The Home's Manager attends further training in dealing and responding to complaints.

## 10. Complaints from neighbours/Local Community

Complaints made by members of the public on their own right (e.g. Neighbours of the unit) will be dealt with under this Compliments Procedure.

Complaints made by professionals (e.g. Teachers, health visitors etc) will be dealt with directly by the Home's Manager.

The following will apply:

- Rapid and respectful responses are vital.
- All interactions must maintain professionalism.
- Immediate solutions should be sought where possible.
- Apologies must be made for any disturbance or damage.
- Detailed recording of complaints is required, including dates, nature, and actions taken.
- The Registered Manager should be informed promptly.

## 11. Monitoring and reviewing

The Registered Manager holds the responsibility to:

- Thoroughly review the Record of Complaint.
- Ensure the complaint process's accuracy and adherence.
- Monitor types and frequency of complaints.
- Detect complaint patterns.
- Amend home policies and practices based on insights from reviews.
- Execute further actions based on individual cases.

## 12. Disciplinary procedure

The Home's Manager and Sansaar operate a disciplinary procedure which provides for the suspension of an employee where necessary in the interests of the safety, or welfare of children accommodated in the home, or using the service and:

Provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident or complaint relating to the abuse, or suspected abuse of a child accommodated in the home or using the service to an appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted.

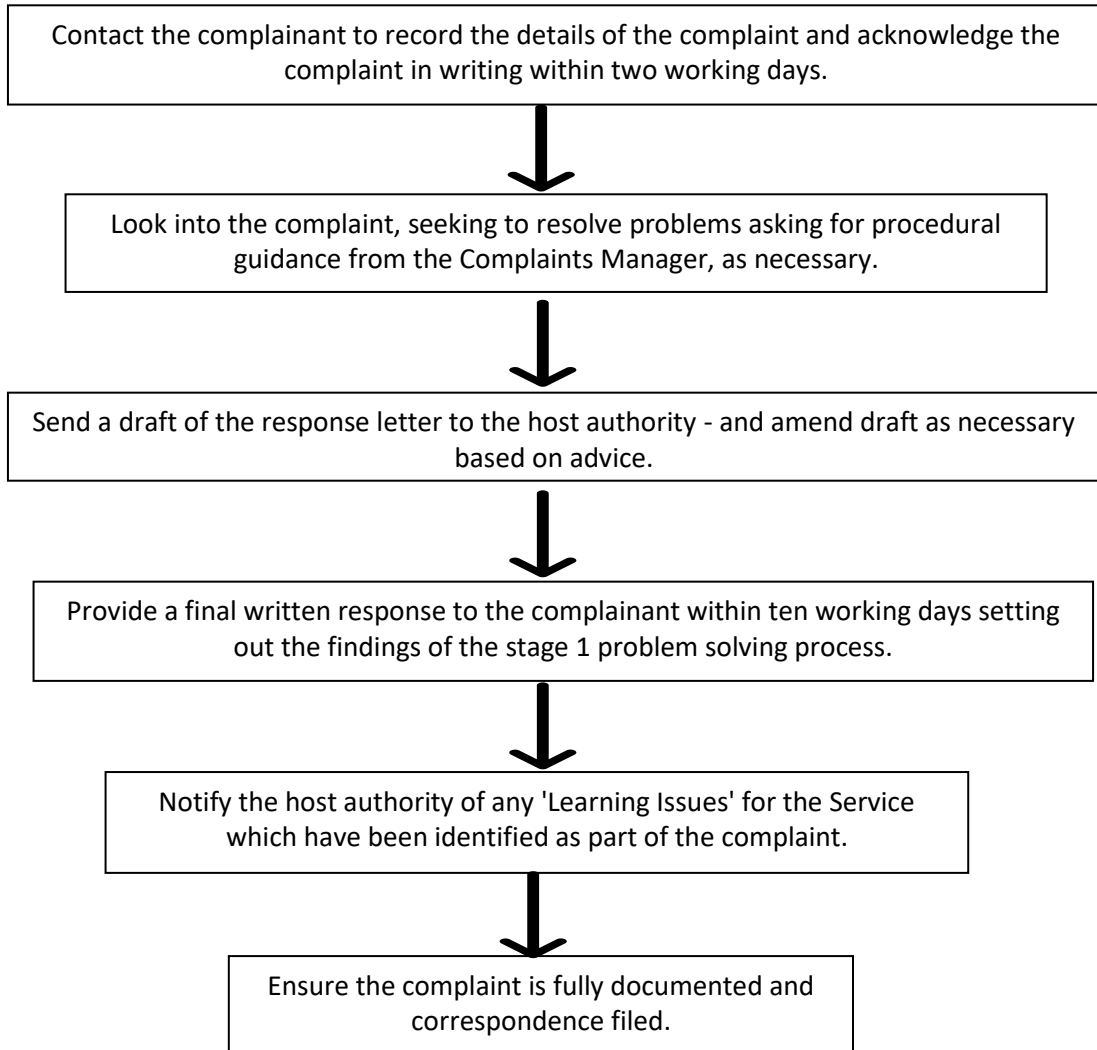
Sansaar's unwaveringly committed to the well-being, trust, and safety of all children under its care. This Complaints Policy serves as a testament to our dedication in ensuring every child feels heard, valued, and protected. It is vital to understand that complaints are not just criticisms; they are opportunities to enhance our services, address concerns, and reinforce the trust between us and the children. Through consistent monitoring, training, and emphasis on transparency, we aim to cultivate an environment where children can thrive, feel safe, and confidently voice any concerns. We continually urge all staff members to familiarize themselves with and uphold this policy, as our collective effort is pivotal in making Sansaar a nurturing and responsive home for all children.

## Appendix A

### Formal Complaint

#### Stage 1.

Once the Home's Manager received a formal complaint they will:



The complainant, if not satisfied, can progress the complaint to Stage 2 of the Complaints procedure.

#### Stage 2

The complaint will be investigated by a manager not previously involved in the complaint and a Responsible individual (RI) or the IRO of the young person. They will respond in writing as soon as applicable, outlining their findings and recommendation to the social care team and Safeguarding/IRO); The IRO will take over to mediate an outcome of the complaint.

**Appendix B**

| Witnessing or receiving an allegation or disclosure of abuse at Sansaar |  |
|---|--|
| Listen closely to exactly what the young person is saying.              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your role is not to investigate but to listen and gather information and pass it on.</li> <li>• You cannot ask leading questions as this may cause the young person to give different information or change their perception.</li> <li>• You can use TED - Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me... and ask who, what, where and when.</li> </ul>  |
| Take your time and be understanding.                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly in an age appropriate way</li> <li>• Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing.</li> <li>• Do not assume anything.</li> <li>• Do not speculate or jump to conclusions</li> <li>• Do not show shock as this may stop the young person disclosing</li> </ul>   |
| Let the young person know that you need to tell somebody else           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's important to tell the young person at this stage that their disclosure will need to be shared.</li> <li>• Explain to the young person that you cannot keep secrets and you have a duty to report the information that they have shared.</li> </ul>   |
| Does the young person need immediate medical attention?                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may be situations that have been disclosed that mean young people need to be seen by a medical practitioner.</li> <li>• An example of this is if a young person has disclosed physical or sexual abuse immediately after it has taken place following a missing, self-injurious behaviour or attempted suicide event.</li> </ul>  |
| Is the young person safe now  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the young person is in immediate danger or will be in immediate danger very soon do you need to call the police?</li> <li>• If the person against whom the young person has alleged is present ask them to leave immediately but do not disclose any details at all.</li> <li>• As a very last resort you may need to move the young person or young people to a place of safety.</li> </ul> |
| Take some brief notes   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this stage it's important to make some brief notes as soon as possible after speaking to the young person.</li> <li>• It is important that notes are kept brief and factual to not delay the disclosure being shared and action taken.</li> <li>• Consider whether any evidence needs to be preserved.</li> </ul>  |
| Inform a manager  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let a manager know without delay where possible immediately after you have received a disclosure from a young person.</li> <li>• Give the manager an outline of the nature of the allegation.</li> <li>• The manager will help you in ensuring that there are enough staff to provide support for the young people at the home.</li> </ul>  |
| Record exactly what the young person said to you                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your time to record the disclosure and exactly what the young person said. Record the date time, place, words used and how the young person presented themselves to you.</li> <li>• Record the actual words used ie: slang or swear words.</li> </ul>  |

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| Share the recording with a manager   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The disclosure you have received from the young person should be shared with the manager by email as soon as possible.</li> <li>• This will allow the manager to take the necessary steps within the required timescales to protect the young person.</li> <li>• Remember to balance this with being available to the young person.</li> </ul>   |
| Following receiving the disclosure managers will take the following action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the RI and director of the allegation or disclosure</li> <li>• Consider the suspension of the alleged and discuss safety planning</li> <li>• Consider the staffing in the home and whether anyone else is involved who may pose a risk of harm to the young people in the home</li> <li>• Consider what needs to happen next in the best interest of the young people.</li> </ul> |
| The young persons welfare and risk assessment                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamically risk assess the young person's safety in the home and consider whether any other intervention is required.</li> <li>• Has the young person been offered medical intervention.</li> <li>• Ensure someone is supporting the young person</li> </ul>  |
| The welfare of the staff receiving the disclosure                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check on their welfare</li> <li>• Remind them they must not share any details of the disclosure allow them to talk to a director or a manager to debrief.</li> <li>• Do they need time off</li> <li>• Do they need support, EPA?</li> <li>• Arrange supervision</li> </ul>   |
| The welfare of the person subject to the allegation                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in with the person who is the subject of the allegation</li> <li>• Do not share details of the allegation at this stage</li> <li>• Inform them they are suspended with pay (if required) Follow this decision with an email.</li> <li>• Inform them that you are speaking to LADO asap.</li> </ul>   |
| Inform young person's placing authority                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ring the placing authority EDT</li> <li>• Email SW and other relevant professionals</li> <li>• Ask social worker about a MASH referral to be completed and complete one if required.</li> <li>• Find out off SW or EDT who will inform the people with parental responsibility.</li> </ul>   |
| Liaise with Bradford LADO  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform Bradford's LADO - keep a record of this conversation and any outcomes</li> <li>• Discuss the best way forward with LADO</li> </ul>  |
| Inform the police if necessary   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the police should be informed ring them and give details and contact numbers. Take log number and record in trigger plan and daily log.</li> </ul>  |
| Reg 27 notification  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RM notify Ofsted</li> <li>• RM to keep Ofsted up to date of progress and outcomes</li> </ul>   |
| Safeguarding policy  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sansaar Safeguarding policy around handling allegations is now invoked.</li> </ul>   |