

Complaints Policy

This policy covers how Family for Every Child enables the public to make complaints in relation to our work. It outlines our policy and commitment to enabling the public to make complaints; how we will respond to these complaints and who is responsible for upholding that commitment.

Family for Every Child strives to be excellent in all that it does but recognises that this cannot always be the case. When we make a mistake we want and need to be informed. We will use the information to endeavour to put things right and to help us to become more effective.

1. Definitions

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by Family for Every Child or its trustees, staff, volunteers or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work. It is a criticism that expects a reply and would like things to be changed. Complaints could include the following (which is not an exhaustive list):

- Concern from someone about the quality of programme delivery
- Concern from a member of the public or supporter about a particular fundraising approach or campaign
- Concern about the behaviour of trustees, staff, volunteers or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work

A complaint can be made by any member organisation, supporter, community or individual with whom we work or any member of the public whether an individual, company or other entity anywhere else in the world.

A complaint has to be about an action for which Family for Every Child is responsible or is within our sphere of influence.

A complaint is not:

- A general query about Family for Every Child's work
- A request for information
- A contractual dispute
- A request to amend records e.g. to correct an address, cancel a donation
- A request to unsubscribe from a Family for Every Child 'service' e.g. a campaign newsletter or email.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to information regarding the programmes and activities administered by Family for Every Child.

Outside of specific Family for Every Child initiated or funded activities, this Policy does not relate to the independent members of Family for Every Child. If we receive a complaint against a member concerning an issue not related to Family for Every Child's own direct

work this will be passed on to the member for their action. The member will be required to inform Family for Every Child of how the matter was resolved.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Family for Every Child's Transparency, Child Safeguarding and Visual Images Policies.

3. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for compliance to this Policy lies with the Family for Every Child Board.

4. Confidentiality

All complaints raised under this policy will be dealt with confidentiality and will be treated seriously and with sensitivity.

5. Language

We will ensure information on the complaints procedure is permanently available on our website in English. During Family for Every Child activities information on the complaints procedure will be made available in the language used by those directly involved.

6. Informal complaints raising procedure

If a member of the public has a minor complaint they can choose to address it to any appropriate Family for Every Child staff member for immediate discussion and amicable resolution. If, at the discretion of the complainant, the matter is not resolved, requires investigation or more senior involvement, then the complainant can make a formal complaint and the procedure in point 7 applies.

7. Formal complaint raising procedure (not including social media)

A formal complaint can be made via the 'contact' link on www.familyforeverychild.org, face to face to the most appropriate Family for Every Child member of staff or members' member of staff, or by any other means (for example post, telephone, the comments section of the Family for Every Child website). Complaints can be made on behalf of affected parties where necessary, but only with the affected parties' proven consent.

For each complaint received it will be the responsibility of the Family for Every Child secretariat staff, trustee, member staff or contractor to inform the Director of the Secretariat team most relevant to the complaint. The Director will then proceed as section 8.

If a person considers their complaint may not be taken seriously through this route, they may go outside the line management structure and raise their concern with the appropriate senior manager.

All complaints should be made within 3 months of incident, but if the complaint is of an exceptional nature Family for Every Child will make exceptions.

8. Action to be taken for a formal complaint (not including social media)

If made by email or post or any other non-verbal method the receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt. If made within the comments section of Family for Every Child's website Family for Every Child have the right to withhold the publishing of the comment until its suitability for the comments section is identified by following the process below.

Complaints will be discussed, either verbally or in writing as deemed appropriate, with the complainant within 14 working days of receipt in order to help determine the precise action to be taken.

It will be for the Director of the Secretariat team with whom the complainant has raised to decide who to talk with during their investigation, with all discussions confidential and recorded. Further, they have the responsibility to decide whether or not to involve other parties to investigate or to direct the complaint to an appropriate independent actor.

Whenever possible, a resolution will be reached and the outcome known within 25 working days of raising the complaint. The complainant will be informed of the action taken and the outcome. Related to the comments page, Family for Every Child may decide the complaint is appropriate for comments page and can be published. Alternately, Family for Every Child may decide it should be dealt with privately between Family for Every Child, the complainant and any other relevant party.

If the investigation cannot be completed within 25 working days, then the complainant will be informed and advised of when it is anticipated that the investigation will be complete.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome he can present an appeal for final decision to the CEO.

If the complainant is still not satisfied then they can take the matter to the most relevant body responsible for non-profits where Family for Every Child is registered. This information will be made available to the complainant.

If the complaint raised a legitimate concern in good faith and an investigation finds the concern to be unfounded no action will be taken against the complainant.

A record of all complaints received and correspondence (including summaries of verbal discussions) related to the complaint will be confidentially kept until the complaint is deemed closed, shown by written record, by both the complainant and Family for Every Child.

10. Complaints received by social media

Given the unpredictable and public nature of social media we would like to encourage complainant to choose to make a complaint by non-social media channels.

Action to be taken for a complaint received by social media



- We will seek to respond with 2 days on the same social media format to any complaint received.
- We will ask the complainant to contact us directly (email, phone, mail) to discuss the complaint further and our commitment to take all complaints seriously and to respond within 25 days following the procedure described in section 8.
- Due to the unpredictable and public nature of social media, together with the likely confidentiality of complaints, we do not feel it appropriate to, and so will not, discuss the details of complaints using social media.

11. Retaliation

Retaliation is defined as any direct or indirect detrimental action recommended, threatened, or taken towards an individual who has reported a complaint under this policy.

Family for Every Child will not accept any retaliation against person(s) who have made complaints under this policy. Any Family for Every Child trustees, staff, volunteers or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work who victimises a complainant for raising a legitimate concern or tries to deter someone from raising a legitimate complaint will be subject to disciplinary action.

Family for Every Child will take appropriate measures to ensure that the effects of retaliation are reversed.

Family for Every Child will enforce mandatory discipline against staff members and members where retaliation is proven to have taken place.

If it is proven retaliation has been made by collaborators Family for Every Child will immediately seek to discuss collaboration agreements with that organisation to receive assurances the matter has been dealt with appropriately.

Any member of staff or member who makes false and malicious accusations or who raises concerns for personal gain will lose the benefit of the confidentiality assurance and be subject to disciplinary action.

12. Ensuring implementation of policy

Family for Every Child are committed to ensuring adequate resources in terms of staff time, training and finance are made available for this policy to be effectively implemented.

Our strategic, annual and activity plans will include sections on procedures for managing complaints together with roles, responsibilities and budget allocations.

The Director of Corporate Resources is responsible for overseeing the above in line with agreement from the Board.

13. Monitoring of policy

The following information will be monitored and reviewed each year with the aim to ensure effective working of the policy:

- Number of complaints received
- How the complaint was received (for example email, telephone, to which member of staff)
- Subject of complaint
- Response time
- How response was with
- If relevant, the satisfaction of the respondent
- Satisfaction of activity participants on the accessibility of a complaints mechanism.
- The main methods used to make available the information on the complaints options for participants
- The evidence for how successful the methods used were.

The staff responsible for Family for Every Child’s Monitoring and Evaluation will submit an annual assessment of the above information to the Board. The Board will then review performance against the Policy and make requests to the Secretariat as to how adequate performance can be ensured.

Document history

This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated where applicable.

Date	Document history
2013	Draft discussed by Steering Committee and final version approved
March 2020	Sections on social media added
June 2022	Minor updates made (eg to job titles and format)
June 2024	Next revision due