

Date: 17 January 2017
For: Employees/volunteers, referrers, members



Complaints Policy

Introduction

Ride High always welcomes suggestions on how to improve Ride High and we will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of Ride High. In addition to this Complaints Policy, we have various written policies setting out how we deal with any concerns raised.

- Our Grievance Policy sets out the procedures for dealing with grievances of Ride High employees and volunteers.
- Our Safeguarding Children Policy sets out the procedures for dealing with a parent/carer's concerns about unacceptable behaviour or possible abuse by another child or young person (hereinafter together referred to as "young people"); or where an allegation of unacceptable behaviour or abuse is made against a Ride High Trustee, employee or volunteer by a young person or their parent/carer.
- Our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy sets out the procedure to assist any Trustee, employee/volunteer, young person, service provider or referrer who believes that they have suffered any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation within Ride High.

This Complaints Policy sets out the procedures for dealing with any other concerns that a young person or his/her parents/carers or a referrer may have about Ride High, its practices or any of its Trustees, employees or volunteers, or any of its members.

We anticipate that most such concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the Operations Manager. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. The key objective of this Complaints Policy is to bring all concerns about the running of Ride High to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Procedures

Stage 1

Any parent/carer, referrer or young person (“the Complainant”) who has a concern about an aspect of Ride High's provision should firstly talk over his/her concerns with the Operations Manager (or if it concerns the Operations Manager, with the Chief Executive). Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the main points are recorded in the Ride High complaints file, and any relevant written correspondence or evidence is stored there.

Stage 2

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the Complainant should put the concerns or complaint in writing to the Operations Manager and Chief Executive.

The Operations Manager and/or Chief Executive will investigate the complaint and will then invite the Complainant to a meeting to discuss the outcome. The Complainant must be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of making the complaint.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the main points are recorded in the Ride High complaints file, and any relevant written correspondence or evidence is stored there.

Stage 3

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, (s)he may request a meeting with the Chief Executive and/or the Chair. The Complainant may have a friend or partner present if required.

An agreed written record of the discussion will be made as well as of any decision or action to take as a result. All of the parties present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it.

When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the main points are recorded in the Ride High complaints file, and any relevant correspondence or evidence is stored there.

Stage 4

If at the Stage 3 meeting the Complainant and Ride High cannot reach agreement, an external mediator is invited to help to settle the complaint. This person should be

acceptable to both parties, listen to both sides and offer advice. A mediator has no legal powers but can help to define the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved.

The mediator keeps all discussions confidential. (S)he can hold separate meetings with any of the Operations Manager, Chief Executive, Chair and the Complainant, if this is decided to be helpful. The mediator keeps an agreed written record of any meetings that are held and of any advice (s)he gives.

Stage 5

When the mediator has concluded her/his investigations, a final meeting between the Complainant, Operations Manager and Chief Executive (or Chair) will be held. The purpose of this meeting is to reach a decision on the action to be taken to deal with the complaint. The mediator's advice will be used to reach this conclusion. The mediator will be present at the meeting if all parties think this will help a decision to be reached.

A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, will be made. Everyone present at the meeting will sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. The main points will be recorded in the Ride High complaints file, and any relevant correspondence or evidence is stored there.

Training and awareness

A copy of this Policy will be shown to all employees and volunteers, and each must sign the list attached to the original to indicate they have read and understood it. It will also be made available to all referrers and members and/or their parents/carers.

Approval and review

This Complaints Policy was approved at a Board Meeting of the Trustees on 17 January 2017. It will be reviewed each September thereafter, or more frequently if appropriate.

Signed.....

Date.....