



COMPLIMENTS, SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Statement of Intent

Families in Partnership (FiP) strives for high standards in the participation, engagement and involvement of our Parent Carer members, Parent Carer Representatives, staff, and Steering Group Members. We welcome feedback from individuals, forums, groups, and organisations, on all aspects of our activity. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us evaluate the impact of our work, give feedback to members and partners, and implement any improvements needed.

Aim of the policy

The objectives of the Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy are to:

- Ensure everyone knows how to provide a compliment or suggestion and how a complaint will be handled.
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly, and sensitively within clear timeframes.
- Provide a fair and effective way for those we engage with to provide compliments, suggestions, and complaints about our activity.
- Ensure that compliments and complaints are monitored and used to improve our activity.

This policy and procedure relate only to compliments, suggestions and complaints about the work of Families in Partnership Worcestershire.

Making compliments and suggestions

We are keen to hear any compliment or suggestion on any aspect of the Forum activity. The Communicate Lead will be responsible for receiving any compliments and suggestions and raising them with the Steering Group. You can contact us using the information below:

Communications Lead, Families in Partnership Worcestershire, C/O Worcestershire Association of Carers, Polysec House, Blackpole Trading Estate West, Hindlip Lane, Worcester. WR3 8TJ. Email: enquiriesfip@carersworcs.org.uk.

All compliments and suggestions are recorded, reviewed by the steering group, responded to, where appropriate, and used to inform our planning process.

Making a complaint

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by an individual, group or forum, whether justified or not. A person may make a complaint if they feel FiP Worcestershire has:

- Failed to meet the FiP Code of Conduct.
- Failed to meet the Department for Education contractual obligations.
- Failed to act in a proper way such as; in relation to its Constitution or other contractual requirements.

Our Commitment to your complaint

The Steering Group will ensure that we:

- Listen carefully to complaints and treat complaints as confidential where possible.
- Record, store and manage all complaints accurately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Investigate the complaint fully, objectively and within the stated timeframes.
- Notify the complainant of the results of the investigation and any right of appeal.
- Inform the complainant of any action that will be implemented in order to ensure that there is no re-occurrence.
- Report, on an annual basis, to the membership the number of complaints received.

Informal complaints

You can make an informal complaint by speaking to any FiP Steering Group Officer, such as the Chair, as soon as possible after the complaint arose. The person you speak too will try to settle the complaint quickly and satisfactorily in consultation with the Steering Group. If the complaint is about a Steering Group Officer you can approach the Chair in confidence, alternatively if the complaint is about the Chair, you can speak to any other Steering Group Officer.

The complaint may be resolved informally by way of an apology, by providing an explanation of why a situation or behaviour occurred, or by any other appropriate remedy. If you still feel that your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, you can make a formal complaint.

Formal complaints

Formal complaints should be made in writing marked private and confidential for the attention of the Steering Group Chair and sent to the postal address below. If the complaint is regarding the Chair, please address the complaint to the Vice Chair. Please ensure you include your name, address, telephone number and email, and if appropriate the organisation you represent - please give as much detail as possible. If you are not confident in making a complaint to FiP we are able to offer independent support to help you do this. Please Note: We cannot accept an anonymous complaint

Individuals wishing to make a complaint should send it to FiP, marked 'private & confidential' at enquiriesfip@carersworcs.org.uk or write to Families in Partnership Worcestershire, c/o Worcestershire Association of Carers, Polysec House, Blackpole Industrial Estate West, Hindlip Lane, Worcester WR3 8TJ.

To enable us to respond to the complaint effectively we may contact you to clarify further relevant information e.g. about the individuals or activities they are complaining about, the reasons for the complaint, the date(s) on which events/activities or discussions which may have led to the complaint occurred, and what outcome they would like to see as a result of their complaint.

Please note we will only investigate complaints about our current activities, or incidents occurring in the six months prior to the date of the complaint.

What we will do when we receive your complaint

On receipt, each complaint will be logged onto a Complaints Register by the Steering Group. If the complaint is in relation to a particular Steering Group member, the person being complained about will not be involved in the logging or investigation of the complaint.

Complaints will be acknowledged within 7 working days. Complaints will be fully investigated, by the appropriate Officers of the Steering Group, and a written response will be provided to the complainant within 30 working days. An extension to this period may be negotiated with the complainant if there are extenuating circumstances e.g. unavailability of the Steering group due to school holidays. Should this be the case a holding letter will be sent within 20 working days and a final date given for a conclusion being reached.

Individuals will be advised that if they are not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they may appeal within 14 working days of receiving the written response. Details of the appeal process will be provided within 14 working days of the Steering Group receiving notice that the complainant is not satisfied.

Appealing the result of your complaint

An appropriately experienced individual who is not a member of FiP would be asked to review the complaint and any investigation or actions taken.

The Independent Individual would then make a recommendation about whether:

- a) the investigation and outcome already arrived at is appropriate,
- b) or that the complaint be upheld
- c) or that some elements of the complaint be upheld and further recommendations for resolution be made

Monitoring of Comments, Suggestions and Complaints

Comments, Suggestions and Complaints are important tools alongside evaluations and feedback from members, to learn how we can improve our ways of working. The Communications Lead will report to the Steering Group any compliments, suggestions or complaints made. These will then be monitored and information from them will be fed into the FiP planning process.

Legal Issues

There may be occasions when FiP is required by law to report the complaint to law enforcement or other legal bodies such as safeguarding. At all times legal, statutory, and professional investigations will overrule this complaints procedure. FiP will not undertake any actions that may compromise these investigations.

- The steering group may take action to protect FiP, its members, volunteers and staff by suspending the volunteer, staff or Steering Group Member until investigations are complete
- It will complete all immediate actions but then suspend the complaints process until external investigations are complete.
- Full and accurate records of all actions will be kept.

UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

FiP will keep all data related to the complaint secure and confidential. The identity of the person making the complaint will be known only to those who are investigating the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public. There may be exceptions to this confidentiality where legislation is involved, or allegations have been made regarding the conduct of a third party. FiP will normally destroy compliments, suggestions and complaints after 6 years.

Policy Title	Comments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy		
Issue Date	August 2023	Review Date	Annually
Version	2.0	Issued By	Steering Group