

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### 1. Policy towards complaints

Arts People Ltd recognises that, despite an organisational commitment to excellence, things can and do go wrong. The directors believe that it is in everyone's best interest to resolve complaints at the earliest possible opportunity and stage.

For the purposes of this policy, a 'complaint' is to be interpreted as *'the expression of concern about the action or inaction of an Arts People Director, manager or tutor in the delivery of an Arts People service.'*

### 2. Purpose of the procedure

This procedure is intended for all clients: schools, parents/carers, students. It can be read and used along with the Privacy Policy. It is not, however, intended to replace the Safeguarding Policy, for which separate procedures apply.

The procedure is intended to allow Arts People clients to understand how to make complaints and how those will be dealt with.

### 3. General principles

The complaints procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- be simple to find, understand and use
- be impartial, but non-adversarial
- ensure action within time limits and good information on the progress of the complaint
- where necessary, ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person
- respect people's desire for confidentiality
- address all the points in the complaint, providing, as necessary, effective response and appropriate redress
- provide information to the directors so that services can be improved



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## 4. Stages of the procedure

### Informal

An informal discussion with the relevant manager or director is the desirable, first stage in seeking to resolve a concern. Arts People commit to:

- Ensuring the concern is dealt with the right person as speedily as is practicable. The right person may well be the person that a complainant has dealt with before, or s/he may be contacted by a person better placed to deal with the issue.
- Keeping the complainant informed of the process of dealing with your concern.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, explaining the formal procedure and supporting the lodging of a complaint.

### Formal Stage

This must be initiated by a written complaint. Arts People commits that:

- Any complaint will be acknowledged within three days of receipt.
- If the complaint is accepted for the procedure, a case manager will be appointed and will keep notes and a log of the process.
- The case manager will conduct an investigation on behalf of the company. Interviews and statements will be taken as necessary.
- All persons interviewed will have the right to be accompanied or represented by a friend, relative or representative at discussions and hearings.
- The directors will meet and consider the investigation outcomes.
- A written response will be sent to the complainant within 10 days of the initial acknowledgement, unless indicated otherwise with good reason for the delay. The response will determine:
  - › whether or not the complaint has been upheld
  - › the reasons why and what action, if any, will be taken.

-If the complainant remains dissatisfied after this response, they should write to Directors within 7 working days of receipt of the formal stage outcome explaining the specific reasons why they do not feel the complaint has been properly dealt with and asking for a review.

### Review Stage

If a request for a review is received, this will be acknowledged within three days of receipt. The directors will meet with an independent person and review the process and outcomes of the formal stage. The review decision will be communicated within a further 20 days, unless indicated otherwise with good reason for the delay.

