

Complaints Policy

Introduction

This document sets out Active Inclusion's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about Active Inclusion or the education provided, please discuss the matter with Senior Managers or Managing Director at the earliest opportunity. Active Inclusion considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved at this stage.

Aims and Objectives

Active Inclusion will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Framework of Principles

- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to use and understand
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation). This confidentiality does not apply to the Secretary of State or inspectors under section 162A of the 2002 Act.
- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to Active Inclusion's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion and you wish to have the matter formally investigated by an appropriate person from Active Inclusion, please set out the details on the attached form. If you would like help, Active Inclusion will be happy to provide the assistance of someone unconnected with the complaint.

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of Active Inclusion
- the interpretation of Active Inclusion's policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at Active Inclusion

It will be investigated by the Managing Director

If the matter is about:

- the Managing Director

then, it will be investigated by the referring body who referred the pupil to Active Inclusion.

The person carrying out the investigation will review the way in which the complaint has been handled and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He/she will write to you reporting the findings and recommendations of this investigation within *15 working days* of receiving the complaint.

If it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case with your complaint, but you are not entitled to know which procedure or the final outcome.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the result from Stage 1, you may choose to refer your complaint to Stage 2 of the procedure. This must be done in writing to Active Inclusion within *15 working days* of the completion of Stage 1.

At this Stage, the complaint will be considered by the referring body or a nominee, depending on who carried out the investigation in Stage 1 and the complainant will be informed in writing of the results of this review : -

The general principle is that Active Inclusion should be able to produce documentary evidence to show that the complaint has received fair and proper consideration within the our procedure. If they have any concerns, they may ask the Managing Director to re-open the investigation. The complainant will be kept informed of any delay.

If the complainant is not satisfied after the referring body or their nominee have completed their review you can request that Stage 3 of the procedure is enacted. This must be done in writing to Active Inclusion within *15 working days* of the completion of Stage 2.

Stage 3

Stage 3 will be carried out by a panel of nominees, who will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of Active Inclusion.

In Stage 3, the panel will consist of at least 3 persons who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant with at least one person independent of both Active Inclusion and the referring body. The meeting will normally take place within *15 working days* of your request.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a friend/partner if you wish, to put your case. Active Inclusion's Managing Director will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write sending the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about and making them available to the proprietor and Managing Director within *5 working days* of the meeting.

The decision of the panel is final.

If you are still not satisfied, you may wish to put your complaint to the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Monitoring and Review

Active Inclusion monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Managing Director logs all formal complaints received and records how they were resolved. The senior management team examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure.

Availability

A copy of this procedure can be made available to all parents on request or a hard copy can be obtained from Active Inclusions Bristol Centre.

Complaints Made to Outside Bodies

It is clearly understood that parents have the right to phone OFSTED after talking to the staff if they feel that they have not received a satisfactory response to their complaint. OFSTED can be contacted on:

0845 6014771 for Registration

0845 6014772 for Complaints

Parents/Carers are also able to contact the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) using the following numbers to obtain impartial advice and recommendations on educational issues, policy and law:

General advice line:

0808 800 5793

Exclusion advice line:

0808 800 0327

Exclusion information line:

020 7704 9822 (24hr answer phone)