



## **Complaints Policy & Procedure**

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## Complaints Policy & Procedure

### 1. Policy Statement

**1.1 Wild Embers** prides itself on offering a high quality, accessible and transparent service to everyone. In order for us to achieve this, we need to know when we get things wrong. We aim to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible, to learn from this and to make changes to continuously improve our service.

### 2. Definitions

2.1 A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether this is deemed as justified or not. These are referred to as “service complaints”

2.2 Our policy covers complaints on the following:

- The standard of service you should expect from us
- The behaviour of Wild Embers staff
- Any action or lack of action by our staff

2.3 Our complaints policy & procedure does not include the following:

2.3.1 Comments about our policies or policy decision

2.3.2 Informal complaints by parents / guardians



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### 3. Informal Complaints Procedure

3.1 Informal complaints are defined as complaints arising which can be resolved without a formal complaints procedure, (such as critical feedback from parents / guardians about how sessions could be improved). Other informal complaints could involve:

3.1.1 Critical feedback about how to improve sessions

3.1.2 Complaints about children's behaviour during sessions. If aggression or bullying is reported these must be dealt with in accordance with our bullying and safeguarding policies and a formal complaint procedure must be followed

3.1.3 Complaints about other parents / guardians / external agencies

3.1.4 Verbal or written complaints not deemed suitable for a formal complaint

3.2 In the event of an informal complaint:

3.2.1 Staff member who received the complaint will inform one of the Wild Embers Directors immediately

3.2.2 The director will decide whether the complaint is a formal or an informal complaint. If a formal complaint is required follow section 4.

3.2.2 The Staff members who received the complaint will then acknowledge the informal complaint in writing (via email) within 48 hours using this template:

*Dear ...*

*Thank you for your feedback. We at Wild Embers appreciate your input and want to assure you we take all feedback seriously. A senior member of the team will be in touch within 48 hours with further information about how we can find a resolution and take appropriate action. With kind regards*

3.2.3 The directors or senior member of staff will also acknowledge the complaint and provide an official response providing feedback and appropriate action to be taken where necessary.



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### **4. Formal Complaints Procedure**

4.1 Wild Embers maintains the following standards when handing complaints:

4.1.1 Complaints can be received by letter or email or in person, all complaints are treated seriously and will be handled by a senior member of staff

4.1.2 You will be treated with respect at all times

4.1.3 We expect you to treat staff dealing with the complaint with the same level of respect shown to you.

4.1.4 We will treat your complaint in confidence where ever possible

4.1.5 We aim to deal with your complaint promptly. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days and you can expect a full reply within 5 working days. In some cases, this will not be possible, due to the complexity of the complaint. If this happens, we will tell you the reasons why, keep you informed of any progress and let you know when we will be able to reply.

4.2 We will not treat you less favorably than anyone else because of your:

- sex or legal marital or same-sex partnership status: this includes family status, responsibility for dependents, and gender (including gender reassignment, whether proposed, commenced or completed)
- sexual orientation
- colour or race: this includes ethnic or national origin or nationality
- disability
- religious or political beliefs, or trade union affiliation
- any other unjustifiable factors, for example language difficulties, age, pregnancy and maternity.

4.3 Anyone making a complaint may chose to have a third-party act on their behalf, this could include a professional body, advice organisations or a family member or friend. If a third party is used during the process, Wild Embers will need written consent to this effect, we will then endeavor to keep the third party informed of any progress on the complaint.



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4.4 All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR, subject to the need to disclose information as required by statutory authorities.

4.5 If you wish to make a complaint for the attention of the Directors, please do so via email to either: [info@wildembers.org](mailto:info@wildembers.org) or [richard@wildembers.org](mailto:richard@wildembers.org)

4.6 We will then email to acknowledge the complaint has been received and where possible, send a detailed reply within ten working days. All complaints will receive a thorough investigation by one/both of the Directors at Wild Embers. If the complaint is complex and this is not possible, we will inform you of why this is the case with an indication of when you will receive this correspondence from us.

### 5. Appeals Procedure

5.1 If you have raised a complaint and you are not satisfied with the response then you should contact the Directors and explain why.

5.2 We will then investigate the complaint further and will endeavor to respond within ten working days. If this is not possible, we will contact you with the reasons why and when we will be able to respond.

If at this point you are still not satisfied you can contact:

The Legal Ombudsman,  
PO Box 6806  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 9WJ

**Normally you will need to raise a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of receiving a final written response from us about your complaint, or within six years of the act about which you are complaining occurring. For further information, you can contact the Legal Ombudsman on 0300 555 0333 or [enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk)**



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### **6. When we get things wrong**

6.1 We acknowledge there may be times when we get things wrong, we will act to:

- Accept responsibility and apologise for our mistake
- Explain to you what went wrong and why
- Explain to you changes we have made to prevent it from happening again
- Learn from our mistakes and implement policies and practice where appropriate to do so.

6.2 The action Wild Embers takes to put the matter right is in response to a service and can include any of the points raised above.

6.3 Our response needs to be appropriate and proportionate to the complaint as well as taking into account what redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but we are aware other action may be necessary in some situations.

6.4 List of remedies;

- A full apology, including a clear explanation what happened and/or what went wrong (an apology is not an acceptance of liability under Section 2 of the Compensation Act 2006)
- Remedial action, this may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant
- Provide the service required in first instance (immediately, if appropriate)
- Putting things right, this may include changing practice or policy to prevent further incidents
- Training or supervising staff; or a combination of both

### **7. Complaints Records**

7.1 All complaints, including the investigation process and action take are recorded by us and are used to improve our service.

7.2 We value all feedback and use this to help us:

- Get things right in the future
- Seek continuous improvement as an organization
- Be more open and accountable



## **Complaints Policy & Procedure**

- Continue to deliver a high-quality service

### **Document versions and review control**

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