



# TURNING HEADS SATURDAY CLUB

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Policy Statement

Turning Heads Saturday Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive and high-quality service for all children and young people attending the club. We recognise that parents, carers, young people, staff and other individuals may occasionally have concerns or complaints about the service.

We welcome complaints and feedback as an opportunity to listen, learn and improve. All complaints will be treated seriously, respectfully and fairly, without discrimination or victimisation.

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently;
- concerns are listened to and investigated appropriately;
- children and young people remain at the centre of decision-making;
- complainants are treated respectfully;
- appropriate action is taken to resolve complaints;
- lessons are learned and used to improve the service;
- safeguarding concerns are identified and dealt with through the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

### 2. Who Can Make a Complaint?

A complaint may be made by:

- a parent or carer;
- a child or young person;
- a member of staff;
- a volunteer;

- a professional working with the child or young person;
- another person who has a legitimate concern about the service.

Children and young people will be supported to express their views and make a complaint in a way that is appropriate to their age, communication needs and level of understanding.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.

### 3. What Can Be Complained About?

Complaints may relate to:

- the quality or organisation of the club;
- activities or services provided;
- staff conduct or behaviour;
- communication with parents or carers;
- equality, inclusion or accessibility;
- food, dietary requirements or allergies;
- health and safety;
- the handling of an incident;
- privacy or confidentiality;
- the way a previous concern has been handled.

A complaint that raises a safeguarding concern will be dealt with under the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**, rather than being treated solely as a routine complaint.

### 4. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns should initially be raised with the **Saturday Club Manager / designated person**.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through an open conversation.

The person receiving the concern will:

1. listen carefully;
2. remain calm and respectful;
3. clarify what the concern is;
4. establish what outcome the complainant is seeking;
5. take appropriate action where possible;
6. record the concern and action taken where appropriate.

A complainant will never be required to raise a concern informally if they feel unable or unwilling to do so.

### 5. Formal Complaints

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, or where the complainant wishes to make a formal complaint, they should provide the details in writing where possible.

The complaint should include:

- the name of the person making the complaint;
- contact details;
- what the complaint is about;
- relevant dates or events;
- names of people involved, where known;
- any relevant evidence;
- the outcome the complainant would like to see.

Where a person has difficulty making a written complaint, reasonable support will be provided.

## **6. Acknowledgement**

A formal complaint will normally be acknowledged within **5 working days**.

The complainant will be informed:

- who is dealing with the complaint;
- how the complaint will be investigated;
- when they can expect a response;
- if there is likely to be any unavoidable delay.

## **7. Investigation**

Complaints will be investigated objectively and proportionately.

The person investigating will:

- consider the information provided;
- speak to relevant people where appropriate;
- review relevant records;
- consider the views and welfare of any child or young person involved;
- maintain confidentiality;
- avoid making assumptions or reaching conclusions before the investigation is complete.

Where the complaint concerns a member of staff, they will be given an appropriate opportunity to respond.

Where the complaint concerns the person who would normally investigate complaints, another suitable person will be appointed to investigate.

## **8. Outcome**

A written response will normally be provided within **20 working days** of receipt of the formal complaint, wherever reasonably practicable.

The response will explain:

- the outcome of the investigation;
- the reasons for the decision;
- any action taken or proposed;
- any improvements identified;
- how the complainant can request a review if they remain dissatisfied.

Where a complaint cannot be concluded within 20 working days, the complainant will be informed of the reason for the delay and given an expected timescale.

## **9. Complaints Involving Safeguarding**

A complaint may contain information that indicates a child or young person may be at risk of harm.

In such circumstances, safeguarding takes priority.

The complaint will be referred immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and managed in accordance with the club's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must not attempt to investigate a safeguarding allegation themselves.

Where necessary, concerns will be referred to the appropriate external safeguarding authority or emergency service.

## **10. Complaints About Staff**

Where a complaint relates to the conduct of a member of staff, the matter will be considered carefully and dealt with fairly.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, it may be managed under:

- the complaints procedure;
- the staff disciplinary procedure;
- the safeguarding procedure;
- another relevant organisational procedure.

Where an allegation concerns a member of staff and may meet the threshold for an allegation against a person working with children, the appropriate safeguarding process will be followed.

## **11. Confidentiality**

Complaints will be handled sensitively and information will only be shared with people who need to know in order to deal with the matter appropriately.

Records relating to complaints will be stored securely and handled in accordance with the **Record Keeping and Confidentiality Policies**.

## **12. Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints**

Turning Heads Saturday Club will always aim to listen and respond appropriately.

However, where a complaint is repeatedly raised after it has been fully investigated and responded to, or where behaviour becomes abusive, threatening or unreasonable, the club may take proportionate steps to manage further communication.

This will not prevent a genuine safeguarding concern from being raised or investigated.

## **13. No Detriment**

No child, young person, parent, carer or staff member will be disadvantaged because they have raised a genuine concern or complaint.

Children and young people will be encouraged to express their views and concerns safely.

## **14. Learning From Complaints**

Complaints will be used positively to identify:

- improvements to policies and procedures;
- staff training needs;
- communication improvements;
- health and safety improvements;
- changes to activities or arrangements;
- ways to improve the experience of children and young people.

Where appropriate, actions arising from complaints will be recorded and monitored until completed.

## **15. Complaint Records**

A record will be maintained of formal complaints, including:

- date received;
- name of complainant;
- nature of complaint;
- person responsible for investigating;
- actions taken;
- outcome;
- date of response;

- any further action or review;
- lessons learned.

Complaint records will be retained securely in accordance with the club's **Record Keeping Policy** and applicable data protection requirements.

## **16. Review of This Policy**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and whenever there are significant changes to legislation, guidance, the service or organisational arrangements.

**Policy Owner:** Turning Heads Saturday Club

**Approved by:** Colette Palmer

**Signature:** 

**Date Approved:** 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026

**Review Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2027