


Sunbeams

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Document Control Sheet

Document Title	Sunbeams Complaints Policy
Document Reference	SBP7
Version Number	3
Date Created	September, 2021
Date Approved	September, 2025
Next Review Date	September, 2026
Status	Approved
Approved By	Jessica Zwiebel, Safeguarding Officer and Trustee
Signature	

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Approved By
1.0	Sep 2021	Admin	Initial release establishing complaints process and resolution pathways.	Board of Trustees
2.0	Sep 2023	Admin	Review	Board of Trustees
3.0	Sep 2025	Admin	Comprehensive review; refined informal and formal resolution stages; reformatting for accessibility.	Board of Trustees

1. Purpose

This policy explains how Sunbeams handles complaints from anyone who interacts with our services.

We see complaints as opportunities to learn, improve, and strengthen the trust placed in us by the community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to any individual or organisation wishing to raise a concern or complaint about:

- The quality or delivery of a Sunbeams service or activity.
- The conduct of a staff member, volunteer, or trustee; or
- Decisions made by Sunbeams that directly affect them.

It does not cover safeguarding disclosures, which are dealt with under the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

3. Our Commitment

- Every complaint will be taken seriously and investigated fairly.
- Complainants will be treated with dignity and respect.
- Raising a complaint will never result in discrimination or retaliation.
- We will respond promptly, keep complainants informed, and handle information confidentially.
- We will learn from complaints and use findings to improve our work.

4. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of Sunbeams' services, conduct, or decisions that requires a response.

Concerns that can be resolved quickly and informally should be addressed early, but anyone may request a formal process at any time.

5. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints may be made verbally, by phone, by email, or in writing to any staff member, the Project Manager, or the Director.

If the complaint involves the Director, it should be sent to a Trustee (marked *Private and Confidential*).

We will assist anyone who needs help to make a complaint (for example, due to literacy, language, or disability).

Anonymous complaints will be recorded and investigated as far as possible, although a direct reply may not be possible.

6. The Complaints Process

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where possible, concerns will be resolved informally by staff or a manager within 5 working days.

A brief record will be kept of the issue and outcome.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If unresolved, or if the complainant prefers, the Director will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and aim to respond in writing within 10 working days after investigation.

Stage 3 – Trustee Review

If the complainant is unsatisfied, the Board of Trustees (or a nominated Trustee Panel) will review all evidence and provide a written outcome within 15 working days.

This decision will be final within Sunbeams.

If the matter involves a safeguarding or legal issue, external agencies may also be informed.

7. Safeguarding-Related Complaints

If a complaint suggests that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm, it will immediately be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and handled under the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

In such cases, statutory procedures will take precedence over this policy.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in confidence.

Information will be shared only with those directly involved in investigating or responding to the issue.

Records will be stored securely in line with Sunbeams' Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies and retained for at least six years.

9. Recording and Monitoring

- The Director maintains a Complaints Register noting the date, nature, and outcome of each complaint.

- Trustees review anonymised summaries quarterly to identify trends or recurring issues.
- Learning points and service improvements will be discussed at management meetings and included in staff training plans.

10. Learning and Continuous Improvement

Sunbeams is committed to learning from every complaint.

Themes and feedback from the Complaints Register inform service development, safeguarding training, and future planning.

A summary of complaints and learning may be shared in the annual report (with no personal identifiers).

11. Linked Policies

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Data Protection & Confidentiality Policies

Whistleblowing Policy

Disciplinary Policy

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Signed: _____ Position: Trustee Date: _____