
NSPCC Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

April 2021

1. Our values

One of our organisational values is *Striving for Excellence*. We strive for excellence in everything that we do, but we realise that sometimes we get things wrong and that not everyone will agree with what we do.

We welcome and value feedback as this enables us to listen, learn, and to improve what we do and how. In short, your compliments, comments and complaints help us continue to strive for excellence and help to give children the start in life they deserve.

1. Who this policy is for

This policy applies to individuals (members of the public) and organisations wishing to comment on, compliment or complain about the performance of services, fundraising activities, the suitability of campaigns and the conduct of employees, volunteers, contractors and third parties working with or representing the NSPCC.

Making an internal complaint:

This policy does not apply to NSPCC employees, agency workers, interns, secondees, contractors, consultants and trustees. In the event that they wish to make a complaint, they should refer to the relevant NSPCC policies e.g. Grievance Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and the Safeguarding & Child Protection policy as appropriate.

Neither does this policy apply to volunteers, including those who provide an NSPCC service (eg Childline volunteers), who may use the NSPCC Volunteer Issue Resolution Policy as well as the Whistleblowing and Safeguarding & Child Protection policy as appropriate.

Those persons to whom this policy does not apply should make their compliments and comments to their line manager or persons to whom they consider their compliments/comments are most relevant.

2. Complimenting us

Compliments are valuable, and important to us and when they are received, they will be recorded and reported on. Compliments enable us to:

- understand from our supporters and stakeholders what we do well and the positive difference this makes
- provide positive feedback to our people – whether paid or unpaid
- influence the continued development of what we do, why and how.

3. Commenting on our people or our work

It is always helpful to hear what people think about us, what we do and how.

Compliments and comments are welcome because they:

- help to influence the organisational decisions we may make
- help maintain the standards of our activities
- raise issues of real importance and can lead to change for the better.

Wherever we can, we will record and report, internally and externally if required, on comments we receive.

We will endeavour to acknowledge compliments and comments wherever possible but whilst this may not always be practicable, please be assured that they are always appreciated.

4. Complaining about our people or our work

We recognise that there will be times when our trustees, staff and volunteers or third parties working on our behalf make mistakes, or get things wrong. Where this happens and where we receive a complaint, we will always take this seriously, record and report on it internally and externally if required, and deal with it in a timely manner.

We will always take steps to maintain the confidentiality of your personal information. We will only disclose it to people who need to look into your complaint, and, rarely, to others where we are legally permitted to do so.

5. Defining a 'complaint'

We define a complaint as **“an expression of dissatisfaction, however made about actions taken or a lack of action by the NSPCC, or someone acting on behalf of the NSPCC.”**

Where it is unclear whether a communication is indeed a complaint, we will endeavour to confirm this with you, in so far as we can. If the communication or comment is done anonymously, we may not be able to treat it as a complaint under this policy.

The following issues (this is not an exhaustive list) will be treated as complaints as they touch upon the NSPCC’s purpose and values:

- inappropriate/improper fundraising methods
- poor standards of service including accusations of professional incompetence/misconduct
- financial losses/waste
- current or non-current (historic) harm to children or vulnerable individuals by the NSPCC (see the Management of Safeguarding Allegations procedure or Non-recent Historical Abuse policy)
- criminality within or involving the NSPCC
- the NSPCC being deliberately used for significant private advantage
- non-compliance with the NSPCC’s own policies/procedures
- non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Please note: under certain circumstances we may not be able to respond to a complaint including where:

- you have not identified yourself or provided your contact details
- your complaint is not about the NSPCC
- your expression of the complaint is insufficiently clear
- your complaint has been sent to us and other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email.

However, the NSPCC will still take the complaints seriously and deal with them appropriately, including contacting you where we are able to, to discuss the matter further.

6. Sharing your Compliments, Comments & Complaints with us

Set out below are the details of how and to whom you should submit your feedback:

	COMPLAINTS relating to the NSPCC Chief Executive (CEO) or a Trustee ONLY	ALL OTHER Compliments, Comments & Complaints
Email	governance@nspcc.org.uk	supportercare@nspcc.org.uk

In writing	Head of Governance NSPCC Weston House 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH	NSPCC Supporter Care North West Regional Office Quays Reach 14 Carolina Way Salford M50 2ZY
Telephone	020 7825 2500	020 7825 2505 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

7. Our process for dealing with complaints

Where a complaint has been submitted in accordance with section 7 of this policy, the NSPCC will acknowledge your complaint within five working days, explain the process that will be followed and when a decision will be made.

Following a thorough and fair investigation by us to establish the facts surrounding the complaint, we will always attempt to provide a full, written response within 15 working days. There may be occasions where this is not possible, and we will always notify you of this and advise you of the date by which you are likely to receive a response to your complaint against the NSPCC.

When notifying you of the outcome of our investigation and any follow up action taken, we will confirm to whom you should submit an appeal in the event that you wish to contest the outcome. An appeal must be submitted in writing within 15 working days from the date of the letter notifying you of the outcome and must satisfy one or more of the criteria in section 9 below.

8. Appealing our response

Any appeal must be in writing and satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- you have new, relevant information to present (which you have not previously submitted);
- we have failed to consider adequately or at all information you provided in connection with the complaint;
- the response to your complaint is perverse in that no reasonable person could have reached that conclusion based on the information provided to them.

We will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within five working days.

We will always attempt to provide a full response to your appeal within 15 working days. There may be occasions where this is not possible, and where

this is the case, we will always advise you and notify you of a date by when you may receive a response.

Our outcome response, which will always be in writing, is final, there will be no further redress within the NSPCC but listed in section 11 below are external organisations to whom you may refer.

SUMMARY – COMPLAINTS – QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE:

Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint received preferably in writing – acknowledged within 5 working days by NSPCC • NSPCC aims to respond in full to complaint within 15 working days • Complainant wishing to <i>appeal</i> (where relevant criteria satisfied) must do so IN WRITING within 15 working days of receiving outcome response by NSPCC.
Appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appeal</i> acknowledged by NSPCC within 5 working days • NSPCC aims to provide full & final response to <i>appeal</i> within 15 Working Days of <i>appeal</i> being received.

9. Complaints against the Chief Executive or a member of the Board of Trustees will be investigated as outlined below.

	Complaint will be investigated by	Appeal will be investigated by
If your complaint relates to the NSPCC Chief Executive or a Trustee	Chairman of the Board of Trustees	Nominations and Governance Committee (excluding the Chairman)
If your complaint relates to the Chairman of the NSPCC Board of Trustees	One of the two Vice-Chairpersons	The second Vice-Chairman

10. Taking your complaint outside of the NSPCC

In the event that you remain dissatisfied with the response you have received, you are entitled to take your concerns to any relevant statutory body, including but not limited to:

The Charity Commission (England & Wales)

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

The Scottish Charity Regulator

<http://www.oscr.org.uk/charities/raise-a-concern-about-a-charity/complaint-form>

The Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel

<https://www.goodfundraising.scot/>

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

<http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/about-us/making-a-complaint/>

The Fundraising Regulator

<http://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/make-a-complaint/complaints>

The Advertising Standards Authority

<https://www.asa.org.uk/>

The Information Commissioner's Office

www.ico.org.uk

11. Legal Framework & Guidance

This Complaints Policy takes into account relevant legal requirements, regulations and guidance, including:

- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and other legislation relating to children in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Statutory guidance relevant to the NSPCC issued by the NSPCC's regulators including the Charity Commission

- The Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice, Fundraising Promise and Rulebooks for Face-to-Face Fundraising
- Good Governance: a Code for the Voluntary and Community sector
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Charities (Protection and Social Investments) Act 2016.