



COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

This document sets out KidsAid's policy and procedures for handling complaints, for the benefit of all relevant parties.

KidsAid is committed to providing therapeutic services and support for children, young people, and families who have experienced trauma. Feedback on all aspects of services is valued, including both positive feedback and complaints. Positive feedback helps identify areas of good practice, while complaints and concerns provide opportunities for improvement.

It is recognised that individuals may, at times, be dissatisfied with services received, or services they have sought to access. Individuals have the right to raise a complaint, either informally or formally. All complaints are treated seriously and are responded to with sensitivity, fairness, and within appropriate timeframes.

Policy Statement

KidsAid is committed to delivering high-quality services in line with its mission and values. All complaints are treated with respect, confidentiality, and impartiality, regardless of how they are raised.

The aim is to resolve issues promptly and constructively. All feedback is regarded as a learning opportunity to support continuous improvement and the ongoing development of services.

Scope and Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the term "personnel" is used to ensure clarity and consistency across all roles within KidsAid.

"Personnel" means any individual acting on behalf of KidsAid in any capacity, including trustees, the CEO, the senior leadership team, managers, staff, therapists, volunteers, contractors, agency workers and any other person engaged by or representing KidsAid in a paid or unpaid role.

This policy applies to all personnel.

1. Responsibilities of KidsAid Personnel

All personnel must ensure they understand and comply with this policy.

Personnel are responsible for:

- Supporting the effective handling of complaints in line with this policy.
- Treating all complaints and feedback with respect, sensitivity, and confidentiality.
- Escalating complaints or concerns to the appropriate person in a timely manner.
- Cooperating fully with any complaint investigation process where required.

The Board of Trustees and CEO hold overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is effectively implemented and that appropriate oversight of service standards and continuous improvement is maintained.

The senior leadership team have additional responsibility for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place, understood, and consistently applied across the organisation.

Complaints will be investigated by an appropriately authorised individual, which may include the senior leadership team, the CEO, a nominated Trustee, or the Chair of the Board, depending on the nature and context of the complaint.

2. Eligibility

Anyone who uses, has attempted to use, or has an interest in KidsAid's services is entitled to make a complaint. This includes potential, current, and former beneficiaries, their families and carers, volunteers, partner professionals and organisations, statutory bodies, and members of the public.

KidsAid may, in exceptional circumstances, decide not to progress complaints that are deemed abusive, malicious, or frivolous. Such decisions will be made by a senior leader, recorded, and where appropriate communicated to the complainant.

If a concern is raised anonymously, it should be directed through the charity's Whistleblowing Policy.

Anonymous complaints will be considered on a case-by-case basis, although investigation may be limited where insufficient information is available.

3. Accessibility

To support transparency and ensure complainants are fully informed, all individuals raising a concern will be provided with a copy of KidsAid's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Assistance will be offered to complainants who experience language barriers or have difficulty understanding English.

KidsAid personnel are available to assist individuals in lodging complaints if required. Information may also

be provided in accessible or age-appropriate formats where needed.

4. Complaint Methods

Complaints will be managed in a manner that is proportionate to the seriousness and complexity of the issue raised, with every effort made to achieve an early and positive resolution.

4.1 Informal Complaints

Informal complaints are typically raised verbally (e.g. phone or face-to-face) or in writing (e.g. email or letter). A complaint will normally be treated as informal where it can be resolved quickly and does not require a formal investigation.

It is expected that most complaints will be dealt with at this stage.

KidsAid is committed to resolving informal complaints promptly by engaging with the complainant to understand their concerns and provide an appropriate response. Responsibility for addressing these concerns sits with the relevant senior lead, as follows:

- The Clinical Lead – for matters relating to therapists, therapy interventions, or clinical processes.
- The Deputy CEO – for matters relating to fundraising, grants, and marketing/communications.

If further investigation is required, the complainant will be informed of the expected timescales for resolution. The outcome will normally be communicated within 7 working days. Where there are specific circumstances causing delay, the complainant will be kept informed in writing.

All informal complaints will be documented using the Complaint Record Form to support organisational learning and service improvement.

4.2 Formal Complaints

A complaint will be treated as formal where:

- The complainant requests a formal investigation.
- The matter cannot be resolved at the informal stage.
- The issue is serious in nature.

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing, either by letter or email, and addressed to the appropriate lead at KidsAid:

- The Deputy CEO – for matters relating to fundraising, grants, and marketing/communications.
- The Clinical Lead – for matters relating to therapists, therapy interventions, or clinical processes.

Where a complaint involves an allegation or safeguarding concern about a member of personnel, it will be immediately referred and managed under the Managing Safeguarding Allegations Against Personnel Procedure in line with safeguarding requirements.

If a complainant is unable to submit their concerns in writing, KidsAid personnel will assist by recording the details on their behalf. The complainant will be asked to review and confirm accuracy.

An acknowledgement confirming receipt, together with an outline of the investigation process and expected timescales, will be issued within 7 working days.

To promote transparency, complainants will be provided with a copy of this policy.

The investigation will be led or overseen by the Clinical Lead or Deputy CEO, unless they are implicated in the complaint, in which case escalation will occur to the CEO. If the CEO is involved, the investigation will be undertaken by the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board.

Where a complaint involves safeguarding concerns, it will be managed in accordance with KidsAid's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure.

Any personnel subject to a complaint will be informed appropriately and supported in line with relevant internal procedures.

5. Complaint Outcome

A formal response to the complaint will be provided in writing within 7 working days.

Where this timeframe cannot be met due to complexity or the need for further investigation, the complainant will be informed of the delay and provided with a revised timescale.

6. Appeals Procedure

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may escalate the matter in writing to the CEO or Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The appeal will be reviewed impartially by the CEO or Chair (or delegated appropriately) and a final response will normally be issued within 14 working days.

7. Learning from Complaints

All formal complaints and outcomes will be recorded on the Complaint Record Form and held in a central complaints register.

Complaints relating to personnel will be addressed through supervision, appraisal, or performance processes where appropriate.

Themes and trends will be reviewed at team and leadership level to support continuous improvement. Serious risks will be escalated to the organisational risk register and reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

8. External Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after exhausting internal procedures, they may escalate the matter to external bodies, which may include:

- The Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- Relevant professional regulatory bodies (where applicable).
- Funders or commissioning bodies (where relevant).

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints are handled in accordance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in the investigation.

10. Promotion of Policy

KidsAid ensures that all stakeholders are aware of how to raise concerns by:

- Informing beneficiaries, families, and professionals of their right to complain.
- Embedding feedback opportunities within service delivery.
- Providing feedback forms after interventions.
- Making this policy available in digital and printed formats upon request.

11. Contacts

Role	Name	Email
Clinical Lead / Safeguarding Lead	Carla Mangan	carla@kidsaid.org.uk
Deputy CEO	Geoff Russell-Jones	geoff@kidsaid.org.uk
CEO	Rebecca Caswell-Fox	rebecca@kidsaid.org.uk
Chair of Trustees	Trevor Pearce	chair@kidsaid.org.uk

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the CEO or earlier if changes in law, regulation, or best practice require it.



COMPLAINTS FORM

Section 1: Complainant Details

Name of complainant:

Role/relationship to KidsAid (e.g. client, parent, professional):

Contact details:

- Phone:
- Email:
- Address:

Preferred method of contact: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Letter

Date complaint received:

Received by (name and role):

Section 2: Complaint Summary

Nature of complaint:

- ☐ Service delivery
- ☐ Staff conduct
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Safeguarding concern
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Description of complaint. (Please attach additional pages or correspondence if needed).

Section 3: Action Taken

Type of complaint: ☐ Informal ☐ Formal

Complaint assigned to:

Date acknowledged:

Investigation start date:

Investigation completed on:

Summary of action taken / investigation findings:

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Section 4: Outcome and Follow-Up

Outcome of complaint:

- ☐ Resolved
- ☐ Ongoing
- ☐ Escalated

Resolution provided to complainant:

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Date response sent to complainant:

Follow-up actions required: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, detail action and person responsible:

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Section 5: Learning and Monitoring

Issues identified for improvement and actions recommended / taken to improve practice:

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Recorded by (name and role):

Date logged into Complaints Register:

Reviewed by (name, role, date):
