

## **Birmingham PHAB Camps** **Complaints Policy**

Birmingham PHAB Camps views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure all Trustees and Operational Committee knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

### **Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Birmingham PHAB Camps.

### **Where Complaints Come From**

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Birmingham PHAB Camps.

A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

### **Confidentiality**

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with Birmingham PHAB Camp's Board of Trustees.

### **Review**

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Adopted on: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Last reviewed: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019

## Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to:

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PHAB Chair</b> | Chair<br>Birmingham PHAB Camps<br>155 Braceby Avenue<br>Birmingham B13 0US<br>or by e-mail at <a href="mailto:maxine@bhamphabcamps.org.uk">maxine@bhamphabcamps.org.uk</a> |
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**Verbal complaints** may be made by phone to **Maxine Ross-Wallis, Chair**, on **07812 384265**.

Alternatively, parents or volunteers may legitimately make a complaint to their relevant Camp leader, any member of Operational Committee or Trustee of their choice.

One of our Trustees can arrange to meet with you in person.

## Whistle blowing

If you feel that your complaint, concern or observation needs to be investigated by someone fully removed from the day-to-day running of the operations, our separate Whistle Blowing Policy allows you to raise your concern in private with our legal trustee (Grant) who will aim to keep your identity private and who will look into your concerns.

In instances where you feel your cause for concern is of such a serious nature it cannot be raised with anyone in the charity, you are advised to contact the Charity Commission.

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Whistleblowing Officer</b> | Grant McCaig<br>07713 073884<br><a href="mailto:Grant.Mccaig@thephoenixgroup.com">Grant.Mccaig@thephoenixgroup.com</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>The Charity Commission</b> | <b>24 hour voicemail service</b><br>0300 065 2199<br><b>E-mail:</b><br><a href="mailto:rsi@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk">rsi@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk</a><br><b>Website:</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission</a> |

## Receiving Complaints

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.

The person who receives a complaint by phone or in person should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Birmingham PHAB Camps (for example: child, parent or volunteer)

- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

### **Resolving Complaints**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to Birmingham PHAB Camps Board of Trustees within two weeks.

On receiving the complaint, the Trustees will record it in a complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, that person should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within one week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken appropriate to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint as far as is considered reasonably to divulge.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution, for example Phab England or the Charity Commission.

### **Complaints Log**

A record of all complaints will be kept by the Chair for 2 full years, or longer if the Trustees deem necessary. After this time no records will be kept.

### **Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading the procedure.

### **Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

## **Appendix 1 - Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints**

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words. Sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam"
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry
- Show an interest in what is being said
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) - you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation  
e.g "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of your organisation, then apologise
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Don't promise things you can't deliver
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal