

Little Stars: Complaints Procedure

Little Stars is committed to maintaining high standards across all aspects of our work. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when we fail to meet the expectations we set for ourselves. We take all feedback seriously and use it to improve our services for the families we support in Shropshire.

1. What constitutes a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of Little Stars, its staff, or its volunteers.

Important Note on Safeguarding: If your concern relates to the immediate safety or wellbeing of a child or a vulnerable adult, please notify us immediately. These matters are accelerated through our **Safeguarding Policy** and do not follow the standard investigation timelines below.

2. How to contact us

If you have a concern, please let us know as soon as possible so we can aim to resolve it quickly.

- **Email:** enquiries@littlestarscharity.org
- **Post:** Little Stars, Unit 4, Hussey Road, Enterprise Business Park, Battlefield, Shrewsbury, SY1 3TE

Please note: We are unable to respond to anonymous complaints or matters for which Little Stars is not directly responsible.

3. Our Investigation Process

We aim to treat all complainants with understanding and respect, and we ask for the same for our staff and volunteers.

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 1: Acknowledgment	We will document your complaint and confirm how it will be handled.	Within 5 working days
Stage 2: Investigation	Our Management Team/CEO will conduct a thorough investigation, consulting relevant parties.	Within 20 working days

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 3: Appeal	If you are unhappy with the initial resolution, you may request a review by our Board of Trustees .	Case-by-case

In exceptional circumstances where a complex investigation requires more time, we will keep you updated on our progress.

4. Fundraising Complaints

Little Stars is registered with the **Fundraising Regulator** and committed to the [Code of Fundraising Practice](#). If your complaint relates specifically to our fundraising activities:

1. Please follow the process above first to allow us to resolve the matter.
2. If you remain dissatisfied with our response, you may escalate your concern to the Fundraising Regulator via their [online form](#) or by calling **0300 999 3407**.

5. Other Escalations

For matters concerning the general governance or legality of the charity (such as suspected fraud or serious mismanagement), you may contact the **Charity Commission**. Please note that the Commission does not usually intervene in individual disputes between a charity and its beneficiaries or donors.

6. Confidentiality and Privacy

All information provided will be handled sensitively and in accordance with our [Data Protection Policy](#). We will not divulge the name of the complainant during an internal investigation without express permission, unless required by law.

7. General Provisions

Vexatious or Abusive Complaints Little Stars is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially. However, we do not expect our staff or volunteers to tolerate behaviour that is unacceptable, abusive, offensive, or threatening. We reserve the right to restrict or cease communication with any complainant whose behaviour is deemed:

- **Abusive:** Using offensive language or making personal threats.

- **Persistent/Vexatious:** Repeatedly raising the same issue after it has been fully addressed or refusing to accept a documented decision.

Anonymity and Third Parties To ensure a fair investigation, we generally cannot respond to anonymous complaints. We are happy to accept complaints from a third party (such as a social worker, friend, or relative) acting on your behalf, provided we have your written consent to discuss your details with them.

Data Protection and Retention In accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and our Privacy Policy:

- Information related to your complaint will be stored securely.
- Records of complaints (including correspondence and outcomes) are typically retained for **6 years** following the resolution of the matter for legal and insurance purposes, after which they are securely destroyed.

Exclusions This policy does not cover:

- Matters for which Little Stars is not directly responsible (e.g., the actions of independent partner agencies).
- Employment disputes (which are handled via our internal Staff Grievance Policy).
- Contractual disputes with commercial suppliers.