

## **Sense Policy**

# **Compliments and Complaints Policy Statement**



## Compliments and Complaints Policy Statement

Sense is a responsive organisation guided by a set of core values. We welcome compliments and complaints and are committed to celebrating when we do something well and when we are not, we will manage this fairly and effectively. While we always want to get it right the first time and rejoice in compliments, complaints can be a valuable part of quality improvement. Sense sets high standards and we want to know if we fall short of achieving them.

### Sense will:

- Welcome compliments and complaints as a valuable means of quality improvement and improving service delivery.
- Make a distinction between informal complaints, where we can resolve the issue quickly and formal complaints which need to be investigated.
- Deal with all complaints fairly and effectively, providing explanations and resolution within agreed and set timescales.
- If a complaint is upheld, put preventative action in place so that the issue does not reoccur.
- Promote the Compliments and Complaints Policy and look for ways for the individuals we support and who use our services to access appropriate and accessible information.
- Ensure that Sense staff are familiar with the policy and can explain it to individuals who want to make a complaint.
- Sense will review all compliments and complaints to ensure we learn from the feedback we receive.

**Sense**  
**101 Pentonville Road**  
**London N1 9LG**  
**Tel: 0300 330 9250**  
**Registered charity number: 289868**



## Introduction

These principles describe our behaviours and expectations. They are inclusive and apply to us all; Sense staff, Trustees, the individuals we support, their families, the public and our behaviour to colleagues in other agencies.

Sense's 'I' Statements underpin what we do and the way we behave:

- I will listen to others
- I will understand and respond
- I will respect others
- I will be honest and open
- I will participate and contribute
- I will take informed risk
- I will find things to celebrate
- No decision about me, without me

## The Principles of Our Compliments and Complaints Policy

We encourage feedback from anybody connected to Sense – individuals using our services, their representatives and families, fundraising donors, customers of our shops and members of the public.

Sense is committed to maintaining the highest quality and service standards across all our services and activities. Receiving compliments and complaints enables us to improve the quality of our services.

All Sense employees have a responsibility to ensure that any compliments and complaints received are, acknowledged and resolved as quickly as possible, and in line with our working principles.



We will handle any information received confidentially (information will only be shared with those who need to know) in line with Data Protection Act 1998.

We discourage complaints being made anonymously, as this makes it difficult to investigate thoroughly and impossible to respond to the person making the complaint. However, we will investigate anonymous complaints as far as we can with the information shared with us.

We cannot deal with complaints made later than 12 months after the event occurred. In some circumstances we will consider a complaint outside that time period, if you can give a good reason for not bringing it to our attention earlier and if in our view it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly. This will be assessed case by case.

We will not be able to deal with a complaint which is subject to legal proceedings or is judged to be vexatious.

## **Trying to Resolve the Issue**

If you are unhappy about anything Sense has done or provided, we want to hear from you as soon as possible. It will be helpful if you inform a member of Sense staff as soon as you become aware of a problem.

If it is possible to resolve the issue (Stage 1) quickly and informally with you, then we will do so.

We will look into the cause of your complaint and if something has gone wrong, offer you an explanation together with an apology, and tell you what action we are going to take. Many issues can usually be addressed immediately and we aim to address informal complaints within 24 hours.



## Making a Compliment / Compliment

Please contact the relevant Sense service area, Manager or a member of staff directly or and in writing – let us to know what we are doing well and we will celebrate our good work.

When making a complaint, if having spoken to a member of staff you remain dissatisfied, or if your complaint is of a serious nature we ask you to either:

### Contact the Complaints Officer:

- Sense - 750 TouchBase Pears  
Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6NA
- Log your feedback using the form on our website  
<https://www.sense.org.uk/contact/complaints/>
- Tel: 0800 731 9008
- Email: [complaints@sense.org.uk](mailto:complaints@sense.org.uk)

### If you would like to raise a complaint related to Fundraising, please contact:

- Sense – 101 Pentonville Road  
Kings Cross, London, N1 9LG
- Tel: **0300 330 9257**
- Log your feedback using the form on our website  
<https://www.sense.org.uk/contact/fundraising-complaints/>

In order to resolve your complaint, we will need some information:

- Your name and contact details
- What your complaint is about
- When and where the issue arose
- If you have already complained, the date on which you did so
- The names of the people involved



- Any related concerns or comments you wish to bring to our attention.

## Our Response

Sense will try satisfactorily to resolve any complaint as promptly as possible. We aim formally to acknowledge any complaint within 3 working days and no later than 5 days. Where you complain in person or using the phone we will provide a written copy of your complaint to you within 3 working days, to check we understood the nature of the complaint.

We will give you the name of the Manager / Investigating Officer who will be looking into your complaint as soon as possible.

We aim to complete looking into your complaint and be able to respond to you within 20 working days. However if it becomes clear that a complex investigation is necessary, or a safeguarding investigation or disciplinary proceedings are involved, it will take longer than this as these will hold precedence over the complaints process. We will contact you to explain the delay and as far as we can, appropriately keep you updated regularly.

All cases which involve only an internal investigation will be completed within 6 months at the latest. However in a very small number of cases which involve external authorities, this may not be possible. We will try to keep you updated as far as possible.

If a complaint is upheld the matter will be put right and future preventative action will be identified and implemented. You will be notified of the actions taken unless confidentially and data protection requirements prevent this.

## If You Are Still Dissatisfied

If you continue to remain dissatisfied with our response you should tell us this and the response to your complaint will be reviewed by an Investigating Officer / Complaints Officer who will examine the processes that have led to the previous response. You will be told of their decision within a maximum of another **20 working days**.



If your complaint concerns an individual using a Sense service, or someone receiving care from Sense in their own home or in a day service, once your complaint has been fully investigated by Sense and if you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

The Executive Team and Council will review all Stage 3 complaints including the process and outcome. This is to ensure they have oversight and furthermore to have the opportunity to assess the complaints process and outcome.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provide a free independent service. Following the conclusion of Sense's complaints process you can contact the LGO Advice Team for information and advice, or to register your complaint in the following ways:

#### **England**

**Tel:** 0300 061 0614

**Email:** [advice@lgo.org.uk](mailto:advice@lgo.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

#### **Wales**

**Tel:** 0300 790 0203

**Email:** <https://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/en/Contact%20us.aspx>

**Website:** <https://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/>

#### **Northern Ireland**

**Tel:** 02890 233 821

**Email:** [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://nipso.org.uk/nipso/>

The LGSCO will not usually investigate a complaint until the organisation concerned has had an opportunity to respond and resolve matters.

Many of our operational services in England are registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)



in Northern Ireland. The CQC and RQIA cannot get involved in individual complaints about providers, but is happy to receive information about our service's at any time.

If they receive a significant number of complaints, they can accelerate their next inspection of the specific service.

In order to do this, you can contact them in the following ways:

### **CQC (England)**

#### **Care Quality Commission National Correspondence**

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle -Upon-Tyne

NE1 4PA

**Tel:** 0300 061 6161

**Website:** [www.cqc.org.uk/contactus.cfm](http://www.cqc.org.uk/contactus.cfm)

### **RQIA (Northern Ireland)**

#### **The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority**

9<sup>th</sup> Floor Riverside Tower

5 Lanyon Place

Belfast

BT1 3BT

**Tel:** 028 9536 1111

**Email:** [info@rqia.org.uk](mailto:info@rqia.org.uk)

**Website:** <http://www.rqia.org.uk/>

### **CIW (Wales)**

#### **Care Inspectorate Wales**

Welsh Government office

Sarn Mynach

Llandudno Junction

LL31 9RZ

**Tel:** 0300 7900 126

**Email:** [ciw@gov.wales](mailto:ciw@gov.wales)

**Website:** <https://careinspectorate.wales/>

### **Ofsted**

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD





**Email:** [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

**Tel: 0300 123 4234** – about education or adult services

**Tel: 0300 123 1231** – about children’s services or any other aspect

**Website:** <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/contact>

## Fundraising

If your complaint is about our fundraising practices and you remain dissatisfied after the internal review you can contact the Fundraising Regulator, please see for more information:

<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Complaints-Investigations-and-Remedies-Policy-December-2016.pdf>

If you have a complaint about a **fundraising advert**, please let us know. You can also contact the **Advertising Standards Authority**.

### Fundraising Regulator

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, CAN Mezzanine  
49-51 East Road  
London  
N1 6AH

**By Phone:** Tel: 0300 999 3407

**By Email:** [enquiries@fundraisingregulator.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@fundraisingregulator.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/>

### Advertising Standards Authority

Mid City Place  
71 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 6QT

**By Phone:** Tel: 020 7492 2222

**Website:** <http://www.asa.org.uk>

## Trading

If you have any concerns in relation to our Trading Stores, in the first instance please speak to a member of staff or contact the Complaints Officer. If you want to bring a matter to the attention of Trading Standards –you can find your local Trading Standards Office on the following links:



**Trading Standards England:** <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-trading-standards-office>

## **Post Compliments and Complaints Monitoring and Learning**

Responding to and learning from compliments and complaints is a core value of the organisation as set out in our 'I' Statements'. As such, we will consider whether there is any learning that arises from compliments and complaints, and use that learning to inform service delivery planning, quality assurance and performance improvement

All informal and formal compliments and complaints are centrally monitored and it is critical that we learn from these at service level and share information on a directorate / organisational level, helping to improve practice across the organisation.

Fundraising Complaints will be monitored within the Fundraising department.

A record of any other complaint will be sent to the Complaints Officer  
[complaints@sense.org.uk](mailto:complaints@sense.org.uk) .

Both departments will supply Annual Compliments and Complaints Report's to the Chief Executive's Office, Council and the Sense Quality Board.

Sense's Annual Compliments and Complaints Report will identify trends, patterns, learning opportunities and any improvement made or required in the quality of our services as a result of compliments and complaints. A summary of complaints received and post complaints learning will also be shared with the relevant General Management Teams throughout the year.

The Annual Complaints Report is available on request, please contact  
[complaints@sense.org.uk](mailto:complaints@sense.org.uk).



## Complaints Officer

Sense has a Complaints Officer who oversees Complaints Management across Sense:

**Address:** TouchBase Pears, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6NA

**Tel:** 0800 731 9008

**Email:** [complaints@sense.org.uk](mailto:complaints@sense.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.sense.org.uk/content/complaints>

## Accessibility

If English is not your first language and require an accessible version of this document, please speak to a member of staff or ring our Complaints Freephone **0800 731 9008**. We will either get the document translated or tell you what it means, if necessary using a telephone interpreter.