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Sense Policy

# Complaints Policy

# Complaints Policy Statement

Sense is a responsive organisation guided by a set of core values. We welcome complaints and will manage this fairly and effectively. While we always want to get it right the first time, complaints are 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 complaints as a valuable means of quality improvement and improving service delivery.
* Acknowledge and address informal complaints and formal complaints.
* **An informal complaint** would not usually be in writing or have any trackable record of it being made; more so an expression of dissatisfaction albeit requiring rectification or resolution. Informal complaints are managed at local level with the complainant being given the opportunity to formalise the complaint if required; if the complaint warrants an investigation, then it will be managed within the complaints management process accordingly.
* **A formal complaint** is usually made either in writing or via a specific contact telephone number in case further action is required.
* Deal with all complaints fairly and effectively, providing responses within agreed and set timescales.
* Maintain confidentially (information will only be shared with those who need to know), investigate fairly and endeavour to provide satisfactory resolutions.
* If a complaint is upheld, put preventative action in place to prevent or mitigate recurrence.
* Promote the Complaints Policy and make this accessible to everyone we support.
* Ensure that Sense staff understand the Policy and can help people to make a complaint.
* Review all complaints to ensure we learn from them.

**The Principles of Our Complaints Policy**

We encourage feedback from anybody connected to Sense; people who use our services – accommodation services, Children’s services, buddying, holidays, GOT Groups, day centres, Colleges, shops or fundraising – and / or their families and carers, customers, donors or staff.

Details for accommodation services, day centres, Colleges, shops (Trading) is below. For Fundraising, please [View our Fundraising Complaints Process](https://www.sense.org.uk/get-in-touch/fundraising-complaints/our-fundraising-complaints-process/)

Sense is committed to maintaining the highest quality and service standards across all our services and activities, which is underpinned by our Sense’s ‘I’ Statements -

* 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

Receiving complaints enables us to improve the quality of our services.

Providing information in an accessible format is important to us. If you require the information in an alternative format, please let us know.

We discourage complaints being made anonymously, because this makes it difficult to investigate and respond effectively.

We are not able to deal with complaints made later than 12 months after the event unless the complaint relates to a Safeguarding concern.

We will not deal with a complaint which is subject to legal proceedings or is deemed to be malicious.

**Making a Complaint**

Please contact the relevant Sense service, Manager or a member of staff as soon as possible.

If having spoken to a member of staff you remain dissatisfied, please contact us

* **In writing to** – Sense, 750 TouchBase Pears, Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6NA addressed to the Quality and Compliance Manager
* **Via our website by** [https://www.sense.org.uk/contact/complaints/](https://www.sense.org.uk/contact/complaints/%20)
* **By phone on** - 0800 731 9008
* **By email:** complaints@sense.org.uk

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

* Your name and contact details; email address and telephone number
* What your complaint relates to
* When (the date the cause of the complaint occurred)
* Where the issue arose if applicable
* The names of those involved
* What is deemed to be a reasonable outcome or solution

**We aim to:**

* Resolve complaints as quickly as possible
* Acknowledge complaints within 3 days
* Provide the details of the manager dealing with the complaint (this is stage 1)
* Respond to complaints within 20 days – should an investigation into a complaint take longer we will provider reasons and updated time frames

**If You Are Still Dissatisfied**

If you are dissatisfied with our response you should contact us within 7 days and further investigation will be completed; with a response provided within a further 20 working days (this is stage 2).

If you remain dissatisfied with our response you should contact us within 7 days and an interview review will be completed; with a response provided within a further 20 working days (this is stage 3).

**The Local Government Ombudsman**

If your complaint concerns someone receiving a Sense service, and 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 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

**Website**: 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

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

The LGSCO will not usually investigate a complaint until the organisation’s procedure has been exhausted.

Many of our operational services in England are registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and theRegulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) in Northern Ireland and Care Inspectorate (Wales) or Ofsted.

The CQC and RQIA cannot get involved in individual complaints about providers, but is happy to receive information about our services 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**

9th Floor Riverside Tower

5 Lanyon Place

Belfast

BT1 3BT

**Tel:** 028 9536 1111

**Email:** 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

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

**Ofsted**
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

**Email:** 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>

**Trading**

If you have any concerns in relation to our shops please speak to a member of staff or contact Sense – as detailed above.

If you what 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 Complaints Monitoring and Learning**

Responding to and learning from 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 complaints, and use that learning to inform service delivery planning, quality assurance and performance improvement

All complaints are centrally recorded, monitored and shared at directorate / organisational level, helping to improve practice across the organisation.

Fundraising complaints will be monitored within the Fundraising department.

**Sense**

**101 Pentonville Road**

**London N1 9LG**

**Tel: 0300 330 9250**

**Registered charity number: 289868**