

The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments



Craighalbert Centre
Enabling Children to Achieve

Making a Complaint Policy and Guidance

Published: April 2026
Review Date: February 2027

1. Introduction and context

At Craighalbert, we welcome feedback from children and young people, their parents and families, partner agencies, and other service users and stakeholders.

This policy and associated guidance explain how to make a complaint and how we will handle, respond to, and learn from complaints. It is aligned with the two-stage Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) for public services in Scotland, as described by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in [HowToComplainPublicService.pdf](#).

2. Aims

Our complaints policy and guidance are based on current national legislation and best practice. They form part of a wider framework designed to protect the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people engaging with our programmes.

We recognise that comments, suggestions, compliments, and complaints are valuable feedback. They help us understand what we are doing well and where we need to improve.

We want anyone who wishes to complain to find it easy to do so and to feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously, handled fairly, and used to help us improve our services.

3. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Our complaints policy and guidance are underpinned by the UNCRC, in particular:

Article 1 – Everyone under 18 has these rights;

Article 2 – All children have equal access to their rights;

Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions affecting children;

Article 5 – Parents have rights and responsibilities to guide their child in a way that supports the child’s developing capacity to exercise their rights;

Article 12 – All children have the right to express their views, feelings, and wishes, and to have them taken seriously; and

Article 16 – All children have the right to privacy and protection from harm to their reputation.

We are committed to ensuring that all children and young people fully enjoy their rights. Complaints will be handled in a way that upholds these rights whether raised by a child or young person, on their behalf, or about matters affecting them¹.

¹ Child Friendly Complaints Handling Principles;
<https://www.spsso.org.uk/sites/spsso/files/CFC/CFCPrinciples.pdf>

4. Principles

Our complaints policy is based on key principles that ensure people feel safe, heard, and respected.

Person-centred

We will:

- Respond to individual needs in a flexible and appropriate way;
- Listen with empathy and treat people with dignity;
- Treat staff fairly and respect their rights;
- Support people throughout the process; and
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate.

Accessible and transparent

We will:

- Promote how to make a complaint;
- Ensure the process is clear and accessible;
- Provide trained staff with appropriate resources; and
- Offer clear information, including advocacy support.

Simple and timely

We will:

- Respond within clear and realistic timescales;
- Keep people informed of delays; and
- Handle complaints thoroughly without compromising quality.

Thorough, proportionate, consistent and effective

We will:

- Set and share clear standards;
- Review our process regularly;
- Ensure responses are proportionate; and
- Provide consistent outcomes while recognising individual needs.

Objective, impartial and fair

We will:

- Base decisions on evidence, not assumptions;
- Gather information objectively;
- Provide clear explanations and outcomes;
- Ensure impartial handling; and
- Treat everyone fairly and respectfully.

Resolution

We will:

- Aim to resolve complaints as early as possible;
- Agree outcomes with the person raising the complaint; and
- Empower staff to resolve issues.

Learn and improve

We will:

- Use complaints to improve services;
- Promote a culture of learning;
- Analyse data to identify trends; and
- Share learning with leaders and, where appropriate, publicly.

5. What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about Craighalbert's actions or lack of action, or the standard of service provided by or on behalf of Craighalbert.

A complaint may relate to:

- Delays in services or procedures;
- Failure to provide a service;
- Quality of support or communication;
- Environment or resources;
- Policies or their impact;
- Failure to follow legislation or best practice; or
- Staff conduct or behaviour.

A complaint is not:

- A first-time request for something to be put right;
- A routine request for information or service;
- A request under Data Protection or Freedom of Information legislation;
- A staff grievance;
- A safeguarding concern;
- Malicious or abusive allegations; or
- A matter involving another organisation.

If unsure, please contact us. We will help you decide how best to deal with it.

6. Who can complain?

Anyone who receives, requests, or is affected by our services can complain.

You can complain yourself or through a representative (with consent).

We will:

- Provide support where needed;
- Signpost to advocacy services; and
- Support children to raise concerns in age-appropriate ways.

7. How to make a complaint

You can complain:

In person – Speak to a member of staff;

By phone – 01236 456100;

In writing – Email or letter.

Please provide as much information as you can, including:

- Full name and contact details;
- What went wrong;
- When it happened, who was involved, how this affected you or your child; and
- What you would like to happen as a result.

8. 2-stage complaints procedure

Stage 1 – Early/ frontline resolution

Complaints are generally dealt with best if made quickly and directly to the Craighalbert member of staff or service concerned.

We aim to respond within 5 working days.

We will:

- Listen and understand the issue;
- Offer an explanation or apology; and/or
- Take action to resolve the issue.

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 2 deals with 2 types of complaint:

- Unresolved complaints, i.e. when you remain dissatisfied because of how your complaint was handled or resolved at stage 1; and
- Complex complaints and complaints that raise serious issues that cannot be resolved quickly.

1. Write to the Head of Quality, Partnership and Innovation or the Chief Executive.

Explain what your complaint is about, what has happened so far (including any stage 1 discussions), why you remain dissatisfied and the outcome you hope for.

If you find it difficult to put your complaint in writing, we can arrange support to help you do this.

2. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days.

We will write to you to confirm our understanding of your complaint and the outcome you want.

We will explain the investigation process and timescales and agree how we will keep in contact with you.

3. If necessary and appropriate, we will arrange a meeting with you within 5 working days to clarify your complaint or get more information.

You may be accompanied to the meeting by e.g. a family member or advocate. Because of the need for confidentiality, it may not be appropriate for another parent of a child attending Craighalbert to act as your companion.

We will try to resolve your complaint at this point or may suggest using an alternative complaint resolution approach, i.e. mediation ([Resolve Mediation](#)).

4. If we cannot resolve your complaint, we will carry out an investigation.

5. We will review relevant records, policies and information from staff and others involved.

We will consider what has already been done to put matters right.

We will decide whether your complaint is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.

6. We will aim to provide a full written response as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days of receiving your complaint.

If more time is required, we will explain why, tell you are revised timescales and arrange to keep you updated on progress.

Our written response will address the points you have raised, explain our findings and decision, apologise where appropriate, set out any actions we will take, and tell you what you can do if you remain dissatisfied.

9. If you remain dissatisfied

If you are dissatisfied with our decision or the way we handled your complaint at the end of stage 2, you can ask the Chair of Craighalbert's Board of Trustees to look at it.

1. Write to them at:

The Chair of the Board of Trustees
Craighalbert Centre
1 Craighalbert Way

Cumnbarnauld
G68 0LS

Summarise your original complaint and the steps taken so far.

Explain why you remain dissatisfied with our decisions and/ or actions and identify the outcome you hope for.

2. The Chair, or a designated Trustee, will review your complaint, our stage 2 investigation and decisions.

They may wish to contact you to clarify details about your complaint or to get more information, however a meeting may not be required.

3. The Chair or designated Trustee will normally write to you within 10 working days of receiving your letter, explaining the outcome of their review and identifying any further actions we need to take.

If you remain dissatisfied after review of your complaint by the Chair of Trustees you can refer it to the Scottish Public Ombudsman (SPSO), [We are Scotland's Ombudsman | SPSO](#)

- The SPSO is an independent organisation that investigates complaints and is the final stage for complaints about public service organisations in Scotland
- The SPSO will ask you to complete a complaint form and provide a copy of our final response to your complaint.
- You can do this online at www.spsso.org.uk/complain/form or call them on Freephone 0800 377 7330.

If you still have concerns about an aspect of our nursery provision after using our complaints service, you can refer it to the Care Inspectorate.

- You can do this by filling in an online form - <https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/online-complaint-form>;
- Telephoning 0345 600 9527 Monday to Friday, b 09:00 - 16:00; or
- Emailing concerns@careinspectorate.gov.scot

10. Useful sources of information and contacts

Scottish Public Service Ombudsman

Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Telephone: Freephone 0800 377 7330

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

Care Inspectorate

Compass House
Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Telephone: 0845 600 9527

Website: www.careinspectorate.com

Mediation

Mediation is used more and more to support the resolution of conflict in a wide variety of contexts. Mediation:

- Helps people to solve problems that they are facing;
- Is confidential and unbiased;
- Encourages early resolution of disagreements;
- puts the people involved in control of the outcome;
- Is less formal than grievance and complaints procedures or court proceedings;
- Is less stressful;
- Could be cheaper;
- Could resolve your dispute quicker;
- Shows that you are keen to resolve your dispute amicably; and
- Enables ongoing relationships to be maintained.

Scottish Mediation

18 York Place
Edinburgh
Eh1 3EP

Telephone: 0131 556 1221/ helpline 0131 556 8118

Website: <https://www.scottishmediation.org.uk/>

Resolve Mediation

Children in Scotland
Thorn House
5 Rose Street
Edinburgh
EH2 2PR

Telephone: 07955 788967

Website: <https://resolvemediation.org.uk/contact/>

Advocacy

Independent advocacy is provided differently across Scotland.

To find out what is available in your local area please use the 'Find an Advocate' tool on the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) website - [Find an advocate - Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance](#)

Advice

Citizens Advice Bureau provide free, confidential and impartial advice. An adviser will be able to talk through your situation and work out the next steps. Go to [Get advice | Citizens Advice Scotland](#) to find your local CAB.

Children's Rights and Wellbeing Assessment stage 1 - Screening



Name of policy/measure	Making a Complaint, Policy and Guidance		
Description of overall aims	<p>To ensure our processes align with best practice in model complaints handling;</p> <p>To ensure that anyone who wishes to complain finds it easy to do so and feels confident their concerns will be taken seriously, handled fairly, and used to help us improve;</p> <p>To help us understand what we are doing well and where we need to improve; and thereby</p> <p>To protect the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people engaging with our programmes</p>		
What aspects of the policy/measure will affect children and/ or young people?	This policy is one of a package of policies relating to the care, safety and health and wellbeing of children and young people engaging with our programmes.		
What is the likely impact, direct/ indirect, of the policy/measure on children and/ or young people?	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive</p> <p style="text-align: center;">It complies with UNCRC requirements; it has the potential to advance the realisation of children's rights.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Neutral</p> <p style="text-align: center;">It will have no discernible lessening of/ progress in children's rights/ wellbeing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Negative</p> <p style="text-align: center;">It may impede/ reverse the enjoyment of existing rights, requiring mitigating measures; it fails to comply with UNCRC obligations, requiring modification; it may have detrimental impact on children so should be withdrawn/</p>

			amended significantly
Which groups of children/ young people will be affected?	Children and young people aged 0-19 who attend Craighalbert for education or support services and aged 0-18 years as employees or volunteers.		
Is a CRWIA required? Explain rationale for this decision.	<p>CRWIA NOT required.</p> <p>Policy and procedures underpinned by UNCRC, in particular</p> <p>Article 1 – Everyone under 18 has these rights;</p> <p>Article 2 – All children have equal access to their rights;</p> <p>Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions affecting children;</p> <p>Article 5 – Parents have rights and responsibilities to guide their child in a way that supports the child’s developing capacity to exercise their rights;</p> <p>Article 12 – All children have the right to express their views, feelings, and wishes, and to have them taken seriously; and</p> <p>Article 16 – All children have the right to privacy and protection from harm to their reputation.</p>		
Signed	<i>Aaron Phillips.</i>		
Date	21.04.2026		



Craighalbert Centre

Enabling Children to Achieve



KIND



AMBITIOUS



CHILD-CENTERED



INSPIRATIONAL



COLLABORATIVE

The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments

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Web: www.craighalbert.org.uk

TEL: 01236 456100

E: admin@craighalbert.org.uk

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