

SOUTHEND YMCA COMPLAINTS POLICY

SERVICE PROVISION Policy applies to	The SYMCA mYplace Children’s Home, the Newlands Transitional Supported Housing Scheme for Emergent Adults, New Beginnings the SYMCA 16+ Training Programme, and all other Youth Work/mentoring and Out of School projects
EFFECTIVE FROM	1 st October 2022
RATIFIED ON	14 th September 2022
REVIEW DATE	1 st October 2023
AUTHOR	Syrie Cox MA, Dip.SW, FRSA with Angela Gunning MA Social Care, Chris Thomas QTS, NPQML
POLICY OWNER	Chris Thomas QTS, NPQML

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

SYMCA is a charitable group comprising an Incorporated Charity and subsidiary Academy Trust.

- The Charity is regulated by the Charity Commission and other principal regulators including the Institute of Fundraising, the Information Commissioner’s Office, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The Charity delivers Social Housing (regulated by Homes England), 16+ Training (accredited by the Gateway Awarding Body) and in 2022 intends to provide a Children’s Home (to be regulated by Ofsted). It also delivers recreational, cultural, youth work and out of school activities.
- The Academy Trust known as ‘the Southend YMCA Community School’ is subject to its own policy set, inspections by Ofsted (through the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and accountability to the Secretary of State through the DfE.

Trustees take reasonable steps to protect the charity’s beneficiaries, staff, and those connected with the activities of the charity, from harm or discrimination. They have policies in place that promote equality, diversity, inclusion, and safe and effective practice. Charity personnel (whether paid, volunteer, or contractors) are aware of their responsibilities for operating within the spirit and the practice of the law, and for promoting a safeguarding culture, where respect and dignity is upheld.

SYMCA works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (this is not an exhaustive list)	
Regulated Social Care	The Children’s Homes Regulations and Quality Standards (2015) and with relevance to this policy Reg:39 arrangements for dealing with complaints, The Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations and Quality Standards (2015) , the Children Act (1989) and (2004), The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Human Rights Act (1998)
Social Housing and Facilities	Homes England Standards: Governance and Financial Viability Standard (2015) and Code of Practice (2018), Value for Money Standard (2015), Rent Standard (2015), Home Standard (2015), Tenancy Standard (2015), Neighbourhood and Community

	Standard (2015), Tenant involvement and empowerment standard (2015). Housing meets the Decent Homes Standard and the National Statement of Expectations.
Training, Youth-Work Out of School	The Education (Charity Performance Information) (England) Regulations 2001 Mentoring, counselling and social work activities are delivered by suitably qualified professionals who adhering to the requirements of their professional regulators.
Other	The Equality Act (2010) , Gender Recognition Act 2004, Data Protection Act (2018), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

	POLICY - CONTENTS	PAGE NO
1	OUR PRINCIPLES	3
2	RIGHTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
	2.1. The Role of the Board	4
	2.2 The Role of the CEO, Responsible Individual (RI) mYplace and Senior Managers	4
	2.3 The Role of Staff	4
	2.4. Children and Young People	5
3	WHAT is a COMPLAINT?	5
4	EMPOWERING COMPLAINTS	6
5	HOW COMPLAINTS are MADE	7
	- Stage one	7
	- Stage two	8
	- Stage three	9
6	COMMENTS and COMPLIMENTS	10
7	MATTERS OUTSIDE THE POLICY	10
8	MONITORING our PERFORMANCE	11
9	TRAINING	11
10	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	11
11	APPENDICES	12
	INFORMATION GUIDE HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT	12
	SOUTHEND YMCA COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS FORM	16

This Complaints Policy applies to all Southend YMCA staff (whether paid, voluntary or contractors) and the Charity's wider community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for the Charity and should be read in conjunction with the statutory legislation and guidance listed above and the following SYMCA policies and procedures (this is not an exhaustive list):

Southend YMCA Code of Conduct and wider conduct arrangements set out in the Staff Handbook
 Southend YMCA Safer Recruitment & Procedures
 Southend YMCA Behaviour Management Policy & Procedures
 Southend YMCA Control and Restraint Policy & Procedures
 Southend YMCA Safer Operations Procedures
 Southend YMCA Health and Safety Policy & Procedures
 Southend YMCA Missing Children Policy
 Southend YMCA Anti Bullying Policy
 Southend YMCA Digital Policies

This Policy is a working document, it will be reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose, represents the charity's ethos, and enables consistency and quality across the charity.

1. OUR PRINCIPLES

- 1.1. First and Foremost, Southend YMCA is committed to delivering safe and effective services, which provide Public Benefit. To this end, in our Policy we will comply with Inspection Frameworks, Quality Standards and the regulatory requirements which shape our work. We have made an organisational commitment to continuous improvement driven through reflective practice and informed by research and performance data. See our QUALITY MANUAL
- 1.2. In order to provide the best possible service, we listen to the views of our stakeholders: children, young people, their parents/carers, professional representatives, and members of the public.
- 1.3. The voice and influence of our stakeholders may be expressed in many ways: from the co-design and co-evaluation of our projects; providing informal and formal feedback - making suggestions and recommendations by comments or compliments; through to making formal complaints. See our VOICE and INFLUENCE POLICY.
- 1.4. We believe children and young people have the right to express their opinions and to be listened to. They must be freely able to outline concerns and make complaints without reprisal, punishment, or fear of being treated differently. Similarly, parents/carers, professional representatives and members of the public should not experience censure or disregard for raising a concern or making a complaint.
- 1.5. Southend YMCA regards feedback constructively, in a solution-focused way, all to inform continuous improvement. Our ethically minded team operates to principles of honesty, fairness, and empowerment when dealing with concerns and complaints. They have received relevant training to support complaints facilitation. They are aware of how unconscious bias and presumption may impede judgement and fair resolution of concerns and complaints.
- 1.6. Implicit in the Complaints Policy is the need to safeguard children and young people and vulnerable adults. To do this effectively, we have developed a supportive organisational culture and nurturing approach, which enables disclosure. Where a concern or complaint relates to a safeguarding matter Southend YMCAs SAFEGUARDING + CHILD PROTECTION POLICY must be followed.

1.7 Raising Awareness of this Policy

Children, young people, their parents and carers, social workers and other professionals will be made aware of our Complaints Policy through the provision of our Welcome Pack or Children's Guide, through communications with the charity staff during the referral, assessment, intake and induction stages into our Projects, and via information displays within our facilities.

We will also raise awareness of this policy via marketing materials and the charity website on our welcome page. <https://www.southendymca.org.uk/welcome>

1.8 This Policy applies to all of our personnel: staff, volunteers, and those contracted to provide any of our services. Adherence to this Policy is the responsibility to all personnel deployed by Southend YMCA.

2. RIGHTS, ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The Role of the Board

The Board of Trustees has a responsibility to:

- Comply with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010, updates and wider equalities legislation.
- Monitor the efficacy of Complaints process through considering the number, nature/type and the resolution of complaints, with a view to continuous improvement.
- Report certain matters (serious incidents) to the Charity Commission making prompt, full and frank disclosure and to other regulatory bodies, as well as funders (in line with the Terms and conditions of grant agreements).

The Board will ensure that:

- Funding is in place to support this policy.
- That this policy (and all policies) are maintained and updated regularly.
- A Trustee acts as the highest investigator in our internal complaints escalation process, and reports into our Board. This is currently Kerry Bland.

The Board has delegated powers and responsibilities to the CEO to ensure that the Complaints Policy is implemented. All staff must comply with the Policy - they will receive support to do so through training, and ongoing supervision.

2.2 The Role of the CEO, Responsible Individual (RI) **mYplace** and Senior Managers

The CEO (with the support of the Senior Management Team) and the Responsible Individual for **mYplace** (RI) will provide leadership and vision in respect of the Complaints Policy and Procedures. They will ensure The Policy and Procedures are accessible to all children, young people, their families/carers and related professionals and they know how to make a complaint.

Managers will deal with any complaints with reference to the law and to other relevant policies including Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying and Human Resource Policies. Managers may seek advice from the Charity's Designated Safeguarding Lead, HR Officer and external agencies (as appropriate) in order to support children, young people and their families/carers.

2.3 The Role of Staff

All staff (whether paid, volunteer or contractor) must abide by, and adhere to this Policy. They must act as positive role models when dealing with complaints, furthering an ethos of respect and tolerance.

The staff team will strive to ensure that the Southend YMCA environment is friendly and child-centred, that adults listen to children and act on their concerns.

Named staff have facilitation roles in the Complaints Process and may conduct investigatory meetings on behalf of the Charity. Tasks could include meeting with the complainant to understand their concerns, meeting with related parties, gathering relevant data, through to reporting on the outcome (both informally and by written report) with clear recommendations.

2.4. Children and Young People

When joining a Southend YMCA service, children and young people will be made aware of our Complaints Policy. We also have a film created by young people in the Southend YMCA for their peers - to support other children and young people to make complaints.

3. WHAT is a COMPLAINT?

3.1 **A complaint** is defined as: *'An expression of dissatisfaction about a SYMCA service that requires a response (whether that service is provided directly by the YMCA or by a contractor or partner).'*

3.2 Every day Southend YMCA makes decisions. Our staff work diligently to provide the best possible service; however, sometimes we may not get it right. Therefore, we have a formal complaints process, which is time-bound, with a stepped process to take the complaint further, and all aiming for prompt resolution to the satisfaction of the complainant.

3.3 If people are unhappy about the standard of service received i.e. our actions, or inactions, we encourage them to tell us. **A complaint may highlight any of the following** (this list is not exhaustive):

- A failure to provide a service at an appropriate level or standard.
- A slow response in dealing with a matter raised with us, such as a request for a service.
- Unsatisfactory behaviour by a member of staff e.g. rudeness, discrimination, and bias.
- Failure to follow agreed policies or procedures, or to consider relevant factors.
- Failure to inform children, young people, their families and carers of their rights

3.4 **Comments** good or bad – help us plan. If used constructively, complaints can highlight and dissipate potential conflicts. Recommended improvements will be implemented.

3.5 Many day to day issues, queries, problems and complaints can be **communicated informally**, with the aim of finding an immediate and satisfactory resolution.

Examples could include locating missing property, chasing late transport, rectifying an incorrect lunch.

A note of the problem, date, and action taken to achieve a solution should always be made in the **Service Complaints Workbook**, along with feedback that the person is content with the outcome. However, some complaints cannot be resolved in this way and must follow the formal procedure as outlined below.

4. EMPOWERING COMPLAINTS

- 4.1 Empowerment is about supporting children, young people, and adults, to represent their interests in a responsible, self-determined way.
- 4.2 Each child, young person, or adult is provided with a project specific Welcome Pack or Children and Young People's Guide when joining SYMCA projects and services. This is in a format appropriate to their age, ability, language, and cognition. This includes a precis of key policies including the Complaints Policy and contact details for independent advocacy and support services (i.e. where to access free, confidential and impartial support and advice).
- 4.3 Southend YMCA actively supports children, young people and adults so they understand the difference between a comment, concern, and complaint, and have the expertise, trust, and confidence to speak out.
- 4.4 Opportunities to learn about our Complaints Policy and Procedures are provided at various stages of our service delivery: during referral and assessment meetings, during induction to our projects and accommodation, during 1-2-1 and group sessions (key work sessions, resident/house meetings), and at formal review meetings. Feedback can also be given at these points, offering the opportunity to influence Southend YMCA's projects and initiatives, as an individual, or as part of a group.
- 4.5 In order to progress an equitable and inclusive complaints system children, young people, and adults, may require additional time, support, and resources to fairly engage. Communication can be facilitated through written, verbal, or pictorial information, the use of translation services, and the presence of an advocate or representative.
- 4.6 The Welcome Pack, Children and Young People's Guide and full policies are also made available for parents/carers and professional representatives at an appropriate time (usually before a project commences).
- Parents/carers are encouraged to raise issues about the service when they meet with staff and in young peoples' formal review meetings.
 - Commissioning Authorities, grant funders, and regulators request Policies when conducting due diligence about Southend YMCA. They are assured of our operating standards, which may also be validated through inspections and audits.
 - It is noteworthy that this Complaints Policy escalates through various stages and up to the independent review of commissioners, funders, regulators and ombudsman adding transparency and accountability. Contact details are provided in the Appendices (p12-16).
- 4.7 When it comes to our attention that a child, young person, or parent/carer wishes to make a complaint about another agency, including a placing Authority, they will be supported to access a copy of that organisations Policy and procedure.

4.8 Where staff or volunteers wish to complain they should refer to the SOUTHEND YMCA STAFF HANDBOOK and follow the GRIEVANCE and/or WHISTELBLOWING POLICIES.

4.9 Where a complaint comprises a safeguarding disclosure relating to the conduct of our staff team this is a very serious matter. Staff must follow the SOUTHEND YMCA SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY.

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy should be informed immediately. The only exception to this is where a disclosure relates to these individuals.
- The Safeguarding policy details clear escalation procedures including the involvement of the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) for safeguarding and the Police

5. HOW COMPLAINTS are MADE

5.1 Our commitment to children, young people, parents/carers, co agencies and members of the public is to **operate within a clear and transparent complaints process.**

5.2 **Complaint Methods** - complaints may be made verbally, by email, or by using a Complaints Form (see template in the appendices).

It is important that staff:

- Recognise when a complaint is being made. Seek clarification with the person who appears unhappy, if you are unsure.
- Offer support to enable the Complaint to be made, if it is required. Examples could include helping a person to complete a Complaints Form in writing, supporting a person to access resources such as translation services.

5.3 Some **day-to-day queries can be resolved swiftly** within 24 hours (These must still be recorded). These are categorised as a:

STAGE ONE COMPLAINT (informal)

5.4 At every stage, we will ask the complainant what outcome they are seeking and work towards this wherever possible and feasible.

5.5 Where a Stage One response (informal problem solving) is not appropriate for example where the matter is complex, serious, or is part of a wider pattern - the Complaint will escalate to a stage two complaint.

5.6 The staff member escalating the matter to a STAGE TWO COMPLAINT must explain what is going to happen next and provide details of whom the complaint has been sent to within SYMCA. They must ensure all contact details are correct for the complainant; outline response times, and verify the person has SYMCA's Complaints Leaflet.

5.7 The Complaint should be sent to the relevant Service Manager for review and must be logged on the Service Complaints Record Workbook, along with supporting documentation for review.

STAGE TWO COMPLAINT (formal)

5.8 Once a Manager receives a STAGE 2 COMPLAINT they will contact the complainant in writing which may include email within: **FIVE WORKING DAYS** from the date of the complaint being made

Their response will outline how the Complaint will be dealt with; by whom; their contact details and timescales.

5.9 The Manager will make every effort to resolve a STAGE 2 COMPLAINT and give a full and clear response within: **TEN WORKING DAYS** from the date of the complaint being made

5.10 If it is not possible to meet these timescales, we will let people know why and when they will get an answer, setting an expected date. There must always be a justifiable reason for any delay – by way of example a key witness, or piece of evidence not being available within this timescale.

Where this is case, we aim to fully investigate and respond within a maximum of: **TWENTY WORKING DAYS** from the date of the complaint being made.

Any investigations, which fall outside of these timescales, should be rare, and address exceptional or complex circumstance. In these circumstances, every effort will be made to engage the complainant in co-producing a responsive timescales and seek their agreement.

5.11 We will look into the complaint fully and fairly, we will be honest and polite. If the complaint is not to be progressed by SYMCA, we will explain the reasons for this decision and any next steps. Reasons might be: the Complaint is spurious; concerns a matter which is outside of Southend YMCA's jurisdiction; or relates to the actions/inactions of a related organisation (in this event, we will signpost to relevant procedures).

5.12 A person who is the subject of the complaint will not investigate the complaint. A complaint will not be investigated by a person who has a conflict of interest or loyalty, i.e. they are connected to the project, or person(s) about whom the complaint is made. The reason for this is to ensure independence of investigation and judgement.

5.13 We will preserve the confidentiality of information supplied, we will only share information with express permission save for exemptions under the Data Protection Act e.g. to prevent a crime.

5.14 We will send out a summary written response to the complainant setting out the findings of the investigation and any action that will be taken to rectify the matter.

5.15 We will apologise if we have made a mistake and will tell people what we are doing to put things right:

- We are committed to conducting Southend YMCA's business in a way that is fair and appropriate to all sections of the community. We are totally opposed to all forms of unfair discrimination.
- Comments relating to staff may be used for their professional development.

5.16 The Complainant **may NOT be satisfied** with the investigation: for reasons of process, (how the complaint was handled) or of outcome (what is being done to rectify the Complaint).

Where this is the case the Complainant will be offered a Formal Review Meeting and the matter will be categorised as a

STAGE THREE COMPLAINT (Formal Review)

5.17 The Formal Review meeting will be conducted by new personnel:

- Where the Complaint relates to the **mYplace Children's Home** this will be the **Responsible Individual** and SYMCAs Children's Home Trustee.
- Where the Complaint relates to other SYMCA Services this will be the SYMCA Trustee designated to hear Complaints. They may at their discretion investigate this singularly or convene a panel to include other Trustees and/or professionals with relevant technical knowledge. This is so any specialist knowledge and understanding is applied to inform recommendations and resolution.

5.18 It may be that **the Complainant will pursue their complaint with external support** such as an advocate, representation by a body or regulator such as the Children's Commissioner, or lawyer. Before liaising directly with any advocate, person or body purporting to represent children, young people, or vulnerable adult's assurance/consent to liaise must be secured from the complainant. This is to meet Data Protection requirements.

5.19 The Stage 3 Formal Review Meeting must take place within **TWENTY WORKING DAYS** from the escalation date.

5.20 The Complainant can attend the Formal Review Meeting in person, or make representation in writing. The Formal Review will consider information and documentation from every stage of the process, AND further information may be sought by interviewing witnesses and collating statements from related persons and organisations.

5.21 The investigating Trustee and/or Panel must make their recommendations and inform the Complainant of the outcome(s) within **FOURTY EIGHT HOURS** of the Formal Review Meeting.

5.22 Sign off – once a complaint has been completed and recorded the CEO or the **Responsible Individual** for the **mYplace Children's Home** will review the written file and sign it off.

- 5.23 Managers are responsible for retaining all records relating to complaints in their service from Complaint forms and interview notes through to written submissions from relevant parties. They also submit summary data to the Board for review as part of its ongoing scrutiny.
- 5.24 Managers will regularly review complaints. This will provide assurance i.e. that their team members work to consistent standards; they will look for trends and make operational adjustments and recommendations. These will inform the self-evaluation plans.
- 5.25 Managers will provide summary complaints reports to funders and regulators at such frequency as they require. These address the number and type of complaints in the previous period; the action taken; and whether the Complainant was content.

6. COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS

- 6.1 If a child, young person, parent/carer, related organisation or member of the public makes a comment on how to improve our services we will respond within **TEN WORKING DAYS** from the point of receipt
- 6.2 To make a comment or compliment, see the contact details provided below, and/or a form can be provided.
- 6.3 Southend YMCA may consider that a Comment should be escalated as a Complaint. We will always discuss this potential course of action with the person giving a comment.
- 6.4 We are always pleased to receive unsolicited compliments and these add to the monitoring and evaluation of our work.

7. MATTERS OUTSIDE THIS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 7.1 **Anonymous Complaints** will be investigated where they raise serious concerns, and it is possible to do so.
- 7.2 **Unreasonably Persistent Complainants** - There are a small number of complainants who, because of the frequency of their contact, hinder consideration of their, or other people's complaints. Exceptionally, action will be taken to limit the contact of such unreasonably persistent complainants with the YMCA. The decision to do so, and the form of such limitations, will be taken by the Chief Executive and/or the Board of Trustees.
- 7.3 **Unreasonable Behaviour** - Southend YMCA does not expect its staff to tolerate behaviour by complainants, which is abusive, offensive or threatening and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour. In appropriate circumstances, action may be taken to limit the contact of such complainants with Southend YMCA. This decision, and the form of any limitations, will be taken by the Chief Executive with the Board of Trustees.

8. MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE

8.1 We are keen to improve not only our services but also the way we deal with complaints and feedback. We will carry out satisfaction surveys to assess whether complainants were satisfied with this feedback process and hope for their participation and response.

Comments, Complaints, and Compliments, will be reviewed by Southend YMCA, and the findings may be used with a view to using them to further improve services. The frequency, types and resolutions of complaints may be published as part of our performance monitoring process.

mYplace – Southend YMCA will keep records of any complaints at **mYplace**, and how they have been resolved. It is anticipated that Inspectors will review how complaints were dealt with as part of their inspection process, and following any notification of a serious event. The Independent Regulation 44 process will also review and report on how complaints have been addressed and resolved. We will supply to the HMCI, at HMCI's request, a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint.

9. TRAINING

Southend YMCA's Multi-Disciplinary Team comprises staff with professional training and teaching qualifications. We have an internal trainer who orientates new personnel to our Complaints Policy and Procedures as part of their induction/ training and learning plan. Training covers:

- What are our values and standards?
- What constitutes a complaint?
- How an informal complaint should be addressed and recorded.
- The stages of a formal complaint - how interviews should take place, and records be maintained.
- How complaints might be escalated outside of SYMCA to regulators and inspectors, including their interests, priorities and expectations.
- How do we empower children, young people, and vulnerable adults to express their views and make complaints?
- The deployment of adjustments and resources.

Managers and their Deputies fulfil an investigatory role and will attend specialist training so they can acquit this to the highest level. From time to time, the team will be offered related CPD opportunities such as training in unconscious bias, inclusive language etc.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any child or young person and it helps to promote equality at this charity.

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the CEO, Responsible Individual or nominated Trustee. A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Board of Trustee Directors for further discussion and endorsement.

11. APPENDICES

INFORMATION GUIDE -HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

STAGE 1 –INFORMAL *You can contact us by:*

Phone	Head Office: 01702 301301
In writing	Southend YMCA Newlands , 85 Ambleside Drive Southend on Sea Essex SS1 2FY
By email or mobile	<p>Managers responsible for</p> <p>Transitional Supported Housing and Facilities</p> <p>johnlevy@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07918923270</p> <p>Health and Safety</p> <p>markjames@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07918876633</p> <p>Children’s Home</p> <p>Christhomas@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07823348171</p> <p>Positive Activity</p> <p>sachaedwards@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07854790925</p> <p>Early intervention and IT</p> <p>alexmilne@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07918882938</p> <p>Education + Training (New Beginnings)</p> <p>marinawright@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07918873815</p>

	<p>HR</p> <p>andrewsnell@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07981880402</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>Vicky Clark via finance@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07442927668</p> <p>Complaints relating to Managers should be addressed to</p> <p>The SYMCA CEO and Registered Person</p> <p>syriecox@southendymca.org.uk</p> <p>Tel: 07867333518</p> <p>Complaints relating to the CEO and Registered Person should be addressed to</p> <p>The Chair of the SYMCA Board</p> <p>stephenonslow@southendymca.org.uk</p>
By filling in the form at the end of this policy (see p16).	

It may be that a swift response can resolve day-to-day issues. In the event that this is not practical, this will be escalated to:

STAGE 2 FORMAL COMPLAINT

Where an informal response is not appropriate please contact us to make a formal complaint and the designated manager (as detailed above) will investigate the matter. Where the Complaint concerns a Manager the CEO or HR Officer will investigate this Complaint.

We aim to provide a written outcome within 10 working days. As part of the investigation process, we may request to meet with you and interview other persons.

STAGE 3 FORMAL REVIEW MEETING

If you are still unhappy, you have the right of appeal to new personnel. This means independent people will review the Complaint and they will not have been previously connected with the complaint. They will consider the complaint through a Formal Review meeting to which you will be invited, together with a single supporter if you wish:

- Where the Complaint relates to the **myplace Children's Home** this will be the Responsible Individual and/or SYMCA Children's Home Trustee.
- Where the Complaint relates to other SYMCA Services this will be the SYMCA Trustee designated to hear Complaints. They may at their discretion investigate this singularly or convene a panel to include other Trustees and/or professionals with relevant technical knowledge.

The decision will be communicated in writing within 48 hours of the final meeting.

OTHER EXTERNAL ROUTES

If you are discontent with how a complaint has been handled, or want to seek further guidance, you may wish to consider contacting the following organisations:

Fundraising complaints

Contact the **fundraising Regulator** to complain about: the way you've been asked for donations, how fundraisers have behaved

<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/make-a-complaint/complaints/>

Advertising complaints

Contact the **Advertising Standards Authority** to complain about: an advertising campaign you think is offensive, deceptive or inaccurate, the amount of emails or mail you get from the Southend YMCA charity

<https://www.asa.org.uk/make-a-complaint.html>

Data Protection Act & Freedom of Information Act complaints

If a complaint relating to either of these matters cannot be resolved by the YMCA, then your complaint would need to be made to the Information Commissioner's Office at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/complaints/>

Other serious complaints

report serious concerns to **the Charity Commission**, for example if Southend YMCA as a charity is: not doing what it claims to do; losing lots of money; harming people; using assets for personal profit or gain; or is involved in illegal activity

<https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/raising-concerns/>

Social Housing Complaints There is a three step process escalating to the **Housing Ombudsman**.

STEP 1

If a resident is dissatisfied with any matter relating to the work of the Southend-on-Sea YMCA she/he should raise the problem with the relevant Coordinator/Housing Manager, either verbally, or using the complaints form or in writing in the first instance.

If a resident experiences nuisance or harassment from another resident and the matter cannot be resolved between residents she/he should report the matter to the Coordinator/Housing Manager. They will meet the resident to determine a way forward considering matters such as confidentiality, the potential for reprisals, and police involvement as appropriate. They may collect evidence from both parties and discuss the situation with them. The purpose of this contact will be to prevent further occurrence of the problem and to encourage understanding between the parties.

If you are unhappy with how Southend YMCA as your landlord has addressed your complaint the steps to follow are:

STEP 2

Contact a 'designated person' in the first instance- this is your MP, ward councillor or tenants panel. If it is possible, early, local resolution is always the best resolution.

Where this is not achievable proceed to step 3

STEP 3

Contact the Housing Ombudsman <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

Here are the important contacts for the MyPlace Children's Home

Childline 0800 1111

Children's Commissioner for England

The office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London SW1P3BT

Tel: 0207 783 8330

Email: info@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Regulation 44 / Independent Visitor TBA

National Youth Advocacy Services NYAS 080888081001

SOUTHEND YMCA COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS FORM

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE landline mobile
		Email

HOW YOU WOULD PREFER TO BE CONTACTED - BY TEXT/ EMAIL/ PHONE CALL OR LETTER?

WHICH SERVICE DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A COMMENT OR COMPLAINT ABOUT?

PLEASE TELL US WHAT HAPPENED AND WHEN (DATE AND TIME), WHO WAS INVOLVED?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAPPEN NEXT?

SIGNATURE DATE

FOR INTERNAL USE:

DATE COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY WHOM

RECORD ACTIONS TAKEN