



Complaints Policy

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1. Purpose

KitchenJam aims to provide a positive and professional experience for students, parents, carers and customers.

This policy sets out how concerns and complaints about KitchenJam's services will be handled fairly, consistently and without unnecessary delay.

We welcome feedback and will use complaints, where appropriate, to identify improvements to our services and working practices.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints from:

- current or prospective students;
- parents and carers;
- customers and event attendees;
- visitors; and
- other people who use or are directly affected by KitchenJam's services.

It may cover concerns about:

- lessons, classes, workshops or events;
- customer service or communication;
- facilities or access arrangements;
- the conduct of a member of staff in connection with our services;
- decisions relating to participation in KitchenJam activities; or
- another aspect of a person's experience with KitchenJam.

Employment-related concerns raised by members of staff will normally be dealt with through the appropriate staff grievance or employment procedure rather than this policy.

3. Our Approach

KitchenJam will:

- take complaints seriously and treat complainants with respect;
- aim to resolve concerns as early as reasonably possible;
- consider complaints fairly and without making assumptions about the outcome;
- make sure, where practicable, that a complaint is not decided by the person whose conduct is the subject of the complaint;
- communicate clearly about what will happen and when;
- make reasonable adjustments to the complaints process where required;
- handle information sensitively and appropriately; and
- consider whether a complaint identifies changes that should be made to our services or procedures.

A person will not be treated unfavourably simply because they have raised a genuine complaint.

4. Who Can Make a Complaint

A complaint can be made by the person affected or, where appropriate, by someone acting on their behalf.

Children and young people are also able to raise concerns directly with KitchenJam. We will take account of their age and understanding and make the process as accessible as reasonably possible.

A parent, carer or other representative may support someone in making a complaint where appropriate.

Anonymous complaints will be considered where possible, although it may be more difficult to investigate or respond where we cannot contact the person raising the concern.

5. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, we encourage people to raise concerns informally first. Many issues can be resolved quickly through a conversation or email with the relevant member of staff or KitchenJam management.

A person does not have to attempt informal resolution before making a formal complaint where:

- the matter is serious;
- they do not feel comfortable raising it with the person involved;
- the concern relates to discrimination, harassment or safeguarding;
- previous attempts to resolve the issue have not worked; or
- they would prefer the matter to be handled formally.

6. Making a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint can be made by email, in writing or in another accessible format agreed with KitchenJam.

Where possible, the complaint should include:

- the complainant's name and contact details;
- what happened and when;
- who was involved;
- any relevant information or evidence;
- any steps already taken to try to resolve the issue; and
- what outcome or action the complainant is seeking, if known.

A specific complaint form is not required.

Formal complaints should normally be sent to the Complaints Officer using the contact details in Section 15.

If the complaint concerns the Complaints Officer, it should be addressed to another member of KitchenJam management.

7. Acknowledgement and Timescales

KitchenJam will normally acknowledge a formal complaint within **2 working days**.

We will aim to provide a written outcome within **10 working days** of receiving the complaint.

Some complaints may take longer, particularly where:

- several people need to be spoken to;
- further information is required;
- the complaint involves a complex or serious matter;
- a member of staff is unavailable;
- external safeguarding or legal advice is required; or
- another process needs to take priority.

Where we cannot provide an outcome within 10 working days, we will let the complainant know and provide an update on the expected timescale.

Safeguarding action will not be delayed in order to meet or complete the complaints process.

8. Reviewing a Complaint

When considering a complaint, KitchenJam may:

- review relevant correspondence, records or other information;
- speak to the complainant;
- speak separately to staff or other people involved;
- ask for additional information where reasonably necessary; and
- consider relevant KitchenJam policies and procedures.

The person considering the complaint will aim to establish what happened and whether any further action is appropriate.

Where the complaint concerns the actions of a particular person, they will normally be given an appropriate opportunity to respond to the concerns raised.

The level of investigation will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

9. Complaint Outcome

The complainant will normally receive a written response explaining:

- whether the complaint has been upheld, partly upheld or not upheld, where it is appropriate to make such a finding;
- the reasons for the decision;
- any action KitchenJam is able to tell them has been taken or will be taken; and
- how to request a review if they remain dissatisfied.

There may be circumstances where KitchenJam cannot share particular information about another person, including confidential employment, safeguarding or personal information.

Where a complaint identifies an opportunity to improve our services, policies, training or working practices, KitchenJam will consider appropriate changes.

10. Requesting a Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the formal response, they may ask for the complaint to be reviewed.

A request for review should normally be made within **10 working days** of receiving the outcome and should explain why the complainant believes the matter requires further consideration.

Where practicable, the review will be carried out by a member of KitchenJam management who was not responsible for the original decision.

In a small organisation it may not always be possible to identify someone entirely independent of the matter. Where this is the case, KitchenJam will take reasonable steps to ensure the review is as fair and impartial as possible.

The review will consider whether:

- the complaint was handled fairly;
- relevant information was considered;
- the decision was reasonable based on the information available; and
- any further action is required.

KitchenJam will normally acknowledge a review request within **2 working days** and aim to provide a written review outcome within **10 working days**.

The review decision will normally conclude KitchenJam's internal complaints process.

11. Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations

A complaint that raises a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or adult at risk will be handled in accordance with KitchenJam's Safeguarding Policy.

If a complaint includes an allegation about a member of staff, volunteer, apprentice or contractor that may meet the threshold for a safeguarding allegation, it must be reported and handled immediately in accordance with KitchenJam's Safeguarding Policy.

KitchenJam will not use the complaints process to investigate a safeguarding allegation where doing so could interfere with appropriate safeguarding action or an external investigation.

A person may still complain about how KitchenJam has handled a safeguarding matter, but any immediate safeguarding action will take priority.

12. Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment

Complaints involving discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or accessibility will also be considered under the relevant KitchenJam policies where appropriate, including the:

- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy; and
- SEND Policy.

KitchenJam will consider reasonable adjustments to the complaints process for disabled people and others who require additional support to participate.

13. Data Protection Complaints

Complaints specifically about the way KitchenJam has collected, used, shared, stored or otherwise handled personal information will be managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and Website Privacy Policy.

Data protection complaints are subject to specific legal requirements, including acknowledgement within **30 days** and appropriate investigation without undue delay.

Individuals also have the right to raise data protection concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office.

14. Confidentiality and Records

Complaints will be handled sensitively, but KitchenJam cannot guarantee complete confidentiality.

Information will only be shared where there is an appropriate reason, including where it is necessary to:

- investigate or respond to the complaint;
- allow someone who is the subject of a complaint to respond;
- obtain professional, legal or safeguarding advice;
- protect a child or another person; or
- comply with a legal obligation.

Records relating to complaints will be stored and retained in accordance with KitchenJam's Data Protection Policy.

15. Contact Information

For questions or to make a formal complaint, contact:

Complaints Officer: Darryl Powis

Email: darryl@kitchenjam.com

Office Address: KitchenJam, 8-10 Penny Brookes Street, London, E20 1BN

If your complaint concerns Darryl Powis, please contact Jennifer Barlow at jen@kitchenjam.com instead.

16. Related KitchenJam Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy;
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Website Privacy Policy; and
- relevant staff grievance and employment procedures.

17. Monitoring and Review

KitchenJam will consider complaints and their outcomes to identify recurring issues, barriers or areas where our services or procedures could be improved.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where appropriate, including:

- following a significant complaint or incident;
- where experience identifies a gap in the complaints process;
- following relevant changes to legislation or guidance; or
- where KitchenJam's services or working arrangements change significantly.

18. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been prepared with regard to:

- Consumer Rights Act 2015;
- Equality Act 2010;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025; and
- relevant safeguarding requirements and guidance.