

MIDHURST YOUTH TRUST

Complaints Procedure

Version 2

Reviewed June 2026

**Colin Hughes
Chairman
Midhurst Youth Trust**

1. Procedure Statement

The purpose of this document is to specify the Midhurst Youth Trust Centre's Complaints Procedure (MYT). We are committed to providing high quality services to our membership and members of the public who use the Charity's services or engage with us. We place a high value on complaints and use information learnt from them to help us improve what we do and how we do it.

Our aim is to resolve issues of dissatisfaction as close to the initial point of contact as possible and to conduct thorough and fair investigations of complaints so that, where appropriate, we can make evidence-based decisions on the facts of each individual case. Resolving complaints early saves time and resource and contributes to the overall efficiency of the Charity. Concentrating on achieving an early resolution of a complaint as close to the point of contact will contribute to the continued positive experience of those involved.

This procedure applies to all MYT staff and to all of MYT's activities - providing services, managing volunteers and dealing with members, suppliers, customers, supporters and the public.

This procedure does not apply to any complaints made by employees; as appropriate all employee complaints will be handled in accordance with MYT's Grievances Procedures, and through normal feedback channels, such as staff meetings.

If the complaint is in relation to Child Safeguarding, please use the Safeguarding Policy.

2. Scope and Definition

This procedure applies to anyone working on behalf of MYT including the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. It should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents.

All adult Staff/Volunteers will be provided with a copy of this policy.

For the purpose of this procedure, a complaint may be defined as:

'An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more individuals about the standard of service, action or lack of action by or on behalf of the Charity.'

3. Principles

MYT believes that all complaints are valuable feedback that helps the Centre to develop and improve. MYT has the following principles in relation to complaints:

- Provide opportunities for people to make complaints to MYT and ensure that anybody wishing to do so can in a safe environment in which everyone's views are treated with respect and dignity;
- Acknowledge all comments and respond to those requiring a response;
- Deal with all comments promptly, fairly, sensitively and appropriately;
- Take all complaints seriously and deal with them in accordance with the organisation's procedures;
- Provide employees involved in responding to comments with appropriate training on customer care, interpersonal skills and Equal Opportunities;
- Ensure that no-one who makes a complaint or criticism is treated less favourably, victimised or harassed in any way by an employee; any such behaviour could lead to disciplinary action;

- Not expect employees to tolerate unacceptable behaviour by anybody making a complaint and will take action to protect its employees from abusive, offensive or threatening behaviour;
- Monitor and review complaints on a regular basis in order to monitor trends and apply appropriate learning.

Anonymous complaints - If an anonymous complaint contains serious allegations, it will be referred to the Chair of the Trustees immediately. Complaints submitted anonymously will be considered if there is enough information in the complaint to enable the Charity to make further enquiries. If, however, an anonymous complaint does not provide enough information to enable us to take further action, the Charity may decide not to pursue it further. However, the Charity may give consideration to the issues raised and will record the complaint so that corrective action can be taken as appropriate. Any decision not to pursue an anonymous complaint will be authorised by a senior member of staff.

Time limit for making complaints - Complaints should be raised with the Charity as soon as problems arise to enable prompt investigation and swift resolution. There is a time limit of three months to raise a complaint with the Charity, starting from when the complainant first became aware of the problem, unless there are special circumstances for requesting consideration of a complaint beyond this time. Beyond the three-month time limit, the Charity will exercise discretion in the way that the time limit is applied.

4. Process

The process is intended to provide a quick, simple and streamlined procedure with a strong focus on early resolution. The process involves up to two stages:

Stage 1 - Frontline resolution seeks to resolve straightforward complaints swiftly and effectively at the point at which the complaint is made, or as close to that point as possible.

Anyone who has a complaint is encouraged to raise it initially at the point of, or as close to the point of, becoming aware of it. Complaints can be raised with the relevant staff member in charge at the time (e.g. Staff running a specific session). Complaints not related to a youth session or young people can be directed to the Chair of the Trustees.

Complaints at this stage may be made face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email. The purpose of frontline resolution is to attempt to resolve as quickly as possible complaints which are straightforward and require little or no investigation.

Resolution may be achieved by providing an on-the-spot explanation of why the issue occurred and/or an apology and, where possible, what will be done to stop this happening in the future.

If responsibility for the issue being complained about lies in the staff member's area of work, every attempt will be made to resolve the problem at source. If responsibility lies elsewhere, the staff member receiving the complaint will liaise with their manager.

Stage 2 - Complaint Investigation is appropriate where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of frontline resolution, or where frontline resolution is not possible or appropriate due to the complexity or seriousness of the case. Such complaints may require meetings

with those affected. Complaints can be raised with the senior youth worker or the office manager (contact details on the website).

A complaint will be moved to the investigation stage when:

- frontline resolution was attempted, but the complainant remains dissatisfied;
- the issues raised are complex and will require detailed investigation;
- the complaint relates to issues that have been identified by the Charity as high risk or high profile.

Those submitting a complaint must outline the following:

- The specifics of the complaint (or complaints), with full details.
- The desired outcome, if applicable.

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant in writing. If a complainant remains dissatisfied, there is recourse to the Chair of Trustees plus one other Trustee, who will review the investigation and make a final decision on the outcome.

Where appropriate an independent mediator may be used.

Where a complaint relates specifically to a member of staff, a more senior member of staff and/or a Trustee will review/investigate.

5. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.