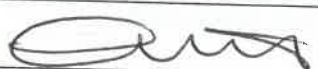




Marches Family Network

Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Updated By	David Bannerman
Owner	Trustees and Staff of Marches Family Network
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Date Approved by Trustees	23 Sep 26
Signed by Chair of Trustees	
Date for Review	August 2027

Introduction

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether made verbally or in writing, about any aspect of Marches Family Network's services, activities, conduct, fundraising or the way in which the charity has carried out its work.

Marches Family Network would hope that most problems could be resolved by expressing your concern to a member of staff. If, however, this is not appropriate, or you are not satisfied that the problem has been resolved or handled to your satisfaction, you may wish to make a formal complaint.

We are required to keep a written record of any complaints.

Our Commitment

Marches Family Network aims to provide a high-quality service across everything that it does, this includes services run for children and young people, families and all fundraising activities. We will therefore ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible.
- Complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially wherever possible. Information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate and respond to the complaint, or where disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Complaints are resolved promptly whenever possible.
- Marches Family Network learns from complaints and uses them to review and improve their service.
- Marches Family Network will make reasonable adjustments to enable people to make a complaint. Complaints may be made verbally, in writing, electronically or through another appropriate communication method where required to meet an individual's needs, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding Concerns

A complaint or concern which raises an allegation of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concern involving a child or young person will be dealt with under Marches Family Network's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy or their Safeguarding Adults Policy and will not be delayed by the complaints procedure.

Where appropriate, concerns will be referred to the relevant safeguarding authority, police or other statutory agency. Allegations concerning an adult who works or volunteers with children will be managed in accordance with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures where applicable.

Personal Data Complaints

Complaints concerning the handling of personal data will be dealt with in accordance with Marches Family Network's Data Protection Policy.

Fundraising Complaints

If a complaint relates specifically to fundraising and the complainant remains dissatisfied after Marches Family Network's internal complaints procedure has been completed, they may be able to refer the complaint to the Fundraising Regulator.

The Fundraising Regulator considers complaints about charitable fundraising where these cannot be resolved by the organisation itself.

Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

Marches Family Network will seek to resolve complaints fairly and proportionately. Where a complaint

is persistent, repetitive or pursued in a way that is unreasonable or abusive, the charity may take proportionate steps to manage further contact while ensuring that any genuine safeguarding, legal or regulatory concerns continue to be considered appropriately.

How to make a complaint

➤ Stage 1

Anyone who has a concern about any aspect regarding Marches Family Network, including provision of services and fundraising, talks over their concerns with the appropriate person.

- ❖ If the complaint arises from an activity session, it should be made to the Session Leader.
- ❖ If the complaint arises from other circumstances, or is about a Session Leader, it should be made to the Manager.
- ❖ If the complaint is about the Manager or a Trustee, it should be made to the Board of Trustees.

Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage. The complaint is recorded in the Complaints Register, a copy of the register is attached as appendix A.

➤ Stage 2

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem reoccurs, the complainant moves to this stage of the procedure by putting the concerns or complaint in writing. Marches Family Network will notify receipt of the complaint within 5 working days of receiving it.

Complaints will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with Marches Family Network's Data Protection Policy, privacy notices and applicable data protection legislation. Where a complaint relates directly to a child or young person's welfare or service provision, relevant information may also be recorded in their individual file where this is necessary and appropriate. If the complaint is not from a parent/carer these are stored in a separate file. When the investigation into the complaint is completed, the person responsible for managing the complaint will communicate the outcome to the complainant and, where appropriate, meet with them to discuss the outcome.

Marches Family Network aims to inform all concerned parties of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

If a satisfactory conclusion has not been reached at this stage any complaints NOT relating to children and young people will be dealt with by the Trustee Board. The decision of the Trustee Board will normally represent the conclusion of Marches Family Network's internal complaints procedure.

➤ Stage 3 (Children's and Young Person Services only)

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can request a meeting with the Manager and the Chair of Trustees. The parent/carer may have someone accompany them. An agreed written record of the discussion is made, as well as any decision or action to take as a result. All the parties present at the meeting sign the record and receive a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded. When the complaint is resolved at this stage, the outcome and any agreed actions will be recorded in the Complaints Register.

➤ Stage 4 (Children's and Young Person Services only)

If at the stage three meeting the parent/carer cannot reach agreement with the charity, they are invited to meet with additional members of the Trustee Board to help to provide an independent internal review of the complaint and assist in reaching a resolution. This meeting can help to redefine the problem, review the action so far and suggest further ways in which it might be resolved. A record of this meeting, including the decision on the action to be taken, is made. Everyone present at the

meeting signs the record and receives a copy of it. This signed record signifies that the procedure has concluded.

Who Should the Complaint be Sent to

All complaints should be sent to Rae Chambers or Fiona Ironside at the following postal or email address:

Marches Family Network
Mortimer House
Holmer Road
Hereford
HR4 9TA

Email: manager@marchesfamilynetwork.org.uk or fi@marchesfamilynetwork.org.uk

Please remember to include your contact details ,

Who Will Deal with my Complaint

Complaints will normally be managed by the Charity Manager and reported to the Board of Trustees.

Where a complaint concerns the Charity Manager, the complaint will be managed by the Chair of Trustees or another Trustee nominated by the Board.

Where a complaint concerns a Trustee, it will be managed by the Chair of Trustees or another Trustee who is not directly involved in the complaint.

Where a complaint concerns the Chair of Trustees, the Board will nominate an appropriate Trustee to oversee the complaint.

Who Else Can Help

If you remain dissatisfied

Marches Family Network will make every reasonable effort to resolve complaints through its own complaints procedure.

The Charity Commission does not normally investigate individual complaints about the services provided by charities. However, if you have a serious concern about the way Marches Family Network is being governed or about a matter which falls within the Charity Commission's regulatory remit, you may raise your concern with the Charity Commission.

Further information is available from the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Charity Commission,
PO Box 211,
Bootle,
Liverpool,
L20 7YX.
Tel: 0300 066 9197

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Legislation, Regulation and Guidance

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989, where relevant to children's services and safeguarding
- Children Act 2004, where relevant to safeguarding
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 – statutory guidance, where relevant to safeguarding
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, where relevant to safeguarding arrangements
- Fundraising Regulator – Code of Fundraising Practice 2025
- Charity Commission – CC47: Raising a concern with the Charity Commission

Marches Family Network Policies Referred To

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Appendix A

Marches Family Network Complaints Register

Date	Name	Contact Details	Complaint	Action Taken	Date Action Taken