



## Complaints and Suggestions Policy

Taunton Home Education aims to provide services and opportunities which meet the needs of its members. We have no paid staff, a very limited budget and rely entirely on the voluntary efforts of busy parents to fulfil our aims. We have a raft of policies and procedures in place to try to ensure everyone is treated fairly and children and young people are safe. We will always try our best.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure we resolve problems promptly and help prevent problems arising in future and facilitate feedback that enables us to continuously learn and improve.

### 1. Introduction

While we will always try to do our best, it is to be expected that sometimes things might go wrong. Sometimes we might fail to deliver to the standards we set ourselves and that others reasonably expect of us. And, if something has gone wrong, we want to know about it, we can then see if something can be done to put it right.

This policy and procedure explains how people can make a complaint. A complaint is when someone tells us they are unhappy about something that has happened or indeed are unhappy about a lack of action. It also outlines what we will do when a complaint is received. It applies to complaints made by people who have contact or involvement with any aspect of our work. For example, this includes members and other people who attend our events, or those who use our information or our services.

We will keep all complaints confidential. It is important that everyone involved treat each other with respect and that everyone is treated fairly throughout the process.

Whether or not arising from a complaint, we always welcome suggestions for things we can do better. We take both complaints and suggestions very seriously. Both can help us to learn, develop and improve what we do. Positive feedback is also appreciated so that we know when we are doing something right and can keep doing it.

## **2. How to make a complaint**

### **Initial Step:**

If you are dissatisfied in any way with anything the first step is to try and resolve it with the person concerned as soon as possible after the thing you are unhappy about happened. Tell them your concerns and see if they can sort it out. If that does not work or you don't feel comfortable doing that then please make a formal complaint as soon as possible.

### **Formal Complaint Stage 1**

There are different ways you can tell us about your complaint. You can contact us by e-mail at [tauntonhomeeducation@gmail.com](mailto:tauntonhomeeducation@gmail.com) by phone on 07473 119425 or by post at Taunton Home Education c/o Weir Lodge, 83 Staplegrove Road, Taunton TA1 1DN. Alternatively use messenger to contact a member of the Management Committee.

You can ask a friend to help you with this and act as an advocate if you need to.

You will need to provide the following information:

- What happened – or should have happened but didn't.
- When it happened.
- What you would like us to do to put things right and any suggestions you have for making improvements.

We will formally acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.

Whoever you discuss your complaint with will listen carefully to your concerns. They will make a written note of your complaint and check it with you to make sure they have recorded it correctly. They will talk to you to see what can be done to put things right. Depending on what the problem is, they may need to investigate what happened by speaking to the person or people responsible and to other people if they witnessed what happened. You (or your advocate, or you with your advocate) may be invited to meet with the person to discuss what happened in person, if that looks like it might be helpful. But you don't have to do this if you prefer not to.

Once your complaint has been investigated, you will be informed in writing (or another way if that isn't accessible to you) about what has been done and about any action taken to put things right, as a result of your complaint. This will happen within

2 working weeks of the date you made the complaint, unless there is a good reason why it needs to take longer, e.g. because the person responsible is away. But if there is a delay, you will be informed about that within 2 working weeks, as well as the reason for it and when you can expect to hear the outcome.

## **Formal Complaint Stage 2**

If you are still not happy with the outcome of your complaint after Stage 1, please let us know why and we will ensure it is reviewed at Management Committee, which will look at your complaint again and what has been done to address it. The Management Committee may carry out further investigations and seek external advice (in confidence). Once they have done this, they will make a decision. This might be that something else must be done to put things right or it might be that what has been done already is enough. That decision is final.

You will be informed about their decision in writing (or another way if that is not accessible to you) about what has been done and about any action taken to put things right, as a result of your complaint. This will happen within 2 working weeks unless there is a good reason why it needs to take longer, e.g. because the person responsible is away. But if there is a delay, you will be informed about that within 2 working weeks, as well as the reason for it and when you can expect to hear the outcome.

## **3. How to make a suggestion**

Taunton Home Education warmly welcome suggestions about how we can improve what we do and the way in which we do it. If you have a suggestion, we actively encourage you to get on touch and tell us about it. This can help us to learn and be more effective. It might also help to identify things that could become problems if not addressed early on.

You can make a suggestion at any time, just by getting in touch by whatever means suits you best. Suggestions may be discussed and given careful consideration at Management Committee. We may not be able to implement all suggestions, or implement them immediately, but we will let you know what we have done about your suggestion.