

Mentor Connect Complaints Policy

Policy Title: Complaints Policy

Effective Date: April 9, 2026

Review Date: April 2027

Approved By: Mentor Connect Management

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints Policy is to provide a clear, fair, and accessible procedure for addressing complaints made by learners, parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders associated with Mentor Connect.

Mentor Connect is committed to delivering structured, personalised one-to-one mentoring for young people aged 11–18 in a safe, supportive, and empowering environment. We value feedback and view complaints as an opportunity to improve our services, strengthen relationships, and uphold our commitment to safeguarding and quality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints relating to:

- Mentoring sessions and programme delivery
- Conduct or behaviour of mentors, staff, or volunteers
- Communication and administrative processes
- Safeguarding concerns (see Section 10)
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion matters
- Partnerships with schools or community services
- Any other service provided by Mentor Connect

This policy applies to:

- Young people (learners) aged 11–18
 - Parents or guardians
 - Staff and mentors
 - Volunteers
 - Partner organisations
 - Members of the public
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3. Principles

Mentor Connect is committed to ensuring that complaints are handled:

- **Promptly** – without unnecessary delay
- **Fairly** – with impartial investigation
- **Respectfully** – treating all parties with dignity
- **Confidentially** – information shared only on a need-to-know basis
- **Safely** – prioritising the welfare of young people at all times
- **Accessibly** – in language and formats suitable for young people and families

We will not tolerate victimisation or retaliation against anyone who raises a complaint in good faith.

4. What Is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- The quality of service provided
- The conduct or actions of staff, mentors, or representatives
- A decision made by Mentor Connect
- A failure to follow policy or procedure

This policy does not replace safeguarding procedures or whistleblowing procedures, though concerns may overlap (see Section 10).

5. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, complaints should first be raised informally with the relevant mentor or staff member. Many concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion.

Informal complaints can be made:

- In person
- By phone
- By email to: info@mentorconnect.org.uk

Staff will aim to resolve informal complaints within **5 working days**.

If the issue is not resolved, the complainant may proceed to the formal stage.

6. Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Formal Complaint Submission

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing and include:

- Name and contact details of the complainant
- Details of the complaint
- Relevant dates and individuals involved
- Any supporting evidence
- Desired outcome

Complaints should be sent to:

Email: info@mentorconnect.org.uk

Postal Address:

Mentor Connect
Birch Park Community Hub
83 Birchover Road
Nottingham
NG8 4BW

Acknowledgement of receipt will be provided within **3 working days**.

Stage 2: Investigation

- A designated senior member of staff will investigate the complaint.
- The investigation may include interviews, reviewing records, and gathering relevant documentation.
- All parties will have the opportunity to present their account.
- Investigations will normally be completed within **15 working days**.

If additional time is required, the complainant will be informed of the reason and provided with a revised timeframe.

Stage 3: Outcome

The complainant will receive a written response including:

- Summary of the complaint
- Findings of the investigation
- Any actions taken
- Information on next steps (if applicable)

Possible outcomes may include:

- Explanation and clarification
 - Apology
 - Mediation
 - Review or change of procedures
 - Staff training
 - Disciplinary action (where appropriate and confidential)
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Stage 4: Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within **10 working days** of receiving the decision.

An appeal will be reviewed by a senior individual not previously involved in the investigation. A final decision will be provided within **15 working days**.

The appeal decision is final.

7. Complaints from Young People

Mentor Connect recognises that young people may require additional support in raising concerns.

We will:

- Provide age-appropriate explanations of the process
- Allow a trusted adult to support them
- Ensure their views are heard and taken seriously
- Avoid intimidating or formal settings where possible

Young people may speak directly to their mentor, another staff member, or contact the organisation using the details above.

8. Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in resolving the complaint.

Records will be stored securely and retained in line with our data retention policy.

9. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered; however, the ability to investigate may be limited without sufficient information.

10. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint involves allegations of harm, abuse, or safeguarding risks to a young person:

- The Safeguarding Policy will be followed immediately.
- The welfare of the young person will take priority.
- External agencies (e.g., social services or police) may be contacted where required by law.

Such matters may be investigated outside of this Complaints Policy framework.

11. Malicious or Vexatious Complaints

If a complaint is found to be deliberately false or malicious, Mentor Connect reserves the right to take appropriate action. This will not deter genuine complaints made in good faith.

12. Monitoring and Review

Mentor Connect will:

- Record all formal complaints
 - Monitor themes and patterns
 - Use feedback to improve mentoring services
 - Review this policy annually
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13. Accessibility

This policy is available:

- On request via email
 - In alternative formats where required
 - In simplified language for young people
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14. Contact Information

Mentor Connect

Birch Park Community Hub
83 Birchover Road
Nottingham
NG8 4BW

Email: info@mentorconnect.org.uk

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 10:00am – 4:00pm