

### **Stage 1 – Initial Contact**

At this stage the aim is to try and sort out the problem in an informal manner. We hope to be able to resolve the majority of complaints at this stage.

A complaint can be made to any member of the Autism Bedfordshire team, but ideally, the complaint should be made through the member of staff responsible for the activity, e.g. Senior Team Leader, Team Leader(s) or Development Officers. Complaints can be made either verbally or in writing.

All complaints will be recorded and passed to the service manager responsible for maintaining the customer feedback file.

If the complaint is serious, then Stage 1 can be bypassed and the complaint can be dealt with at Stage 2.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Complaints**

If you are not satisfied with the response at stage 1, then you can make a formal complaint to the Senior Manager of Autism Bedfordshire. You will need to include the following details:

The date the incident(s) occurred;  
The names of the people involved;  
The aspect of the incident that you are unhappy about;  
The nature of the complaint in general.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible. Your complaint will then be investigated, and you will receive a written response within 20 working days, detailing the outcome of the investigation and action, if any, to be taken. During this investigation you may be contacted directly to discuss the matter in more detail.

If we have any reason to delay the investigation, we will keep you informed as to the reasons for the delay. Staff and volunteers will be given the right to reply to any complaint during this stage of its investigation

The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be informed of the matter.

### **Stage 3 – Internal Independent Review**

If you are unhappy with the Stage 2 response, you can ask for the complaint to be referred directly to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for further investigation. You may also speak with OFSTED directly if you have any causes for concern that are not being addressed by Autism Bedfordshire.

At this stage the Board will be required to meet to discuss the incident and will be required to reply within a further 20 working days, outlining how the complaint has been dealt with and the outcome.

We will maintain full records of the complaint throughout the process.

OFSTED can be contacted at Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

General enquiries  
0300 123 1231

About concerns  
0300 123 4666

The helpline is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

If you are still not satisfied at the end of Stage 3, you have the option of contacting the Charity Commission. For further details, please see their website [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk).

### **3. Complaints against members of the Autism Bedfordshire Team**

Any complaint relating to a member of the Autism Bedfordshire team should in the first instance be directed to the Team Leader, Senior Team Leader or Development Officers. The complaint will then follow the same stages as set out above.

### **4. Reporting**

Autism Bedfordshire will report quarterly on complaints to the Board of Trustees in line with their Performance Management Framework.

## Complaints

We welcome complaints because they help us to see where we can improve our services. If you are not satisfied with the service you receive, please contact us, we will do our best to put the matter right as quickly as possible.

## Complaints Investigation Policy

### 1. Policy

Autism Bedfordshire is committed to providing high quality services that are responsive to the needs of the service users and their representatives. Helping them to make complaints or voice concerns is part of this process.

The aim of this procedure is to enable service users or their representatives to raise complaints about the way in which services are being delivered, or the conduct of members of Autism Bedfordshire's staff.

### 2. Making a complaint

#### Confidentiality

The information you give us will only be shared with those who need to know. If you are complaining about a staff member and do not wish them to know, we will respect this. However, it may be difficult to fully investigate your complaint.

Our complaints process goes through three stages.

*Please use this space to give us your comments*



## Compliments, Comments and Complaints

Autism Bedfordshire is committed to improving the quality of services provided to you. We welcome your feedback on our services.

If you would like to comment on, or compliment us on how we deliver your services, or how we have dealt with your enquiry, please follow the guidelines below on how to give your feedback.

You can contact Autism Bedfordshire by telephone, in person or in writing:

Autism Bedfordshire  
Salamander House  
St John's Street  
Bedford  
MK42 0DH

Telephone: 01234 214871  
Email: [enquiries@autismbeds.org](mailto:enquiries@autismbeds.org)