



Barnardo's
BELIEVE IN CHILDREN

**MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE
SERVICE**

SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

PROCEDURE

UPDATED POLICY MARCH 2004

SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE USING MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE

1. Introduction

Fundamental to Manchester Leaving Care as a Service is the adoption of the basic principle of a 'young person's centred' approach to all dealings with young people using the Service. Central to this approach will be an attitude of involving and empowering young people in choices and plans about their futures and treating young people with dignity and respect. Such a working philosophy will thus aim to generate a climate whereby it will not only be accepted, but encouraged, that young people should comment or complain about both the service they receive individually, or any ideas or criticisms they have as to how the service as a whole can be changed or improved. Though it will obviously never be possible to guarantee that such suggestions or criticisms will automatically be put into practice or remedied, a guarantee can and will be given that such suggestions and criticisms will be listened to and taken seriously, and that the Service will strive to put structures into place which encourage and value user feedback and involvement.

2. Suggestions

Manchester Leaving Care Service will make use of a variety of approaches to ascertain suggestions from young people using the Service. These will include: -

- Involving young people in recruiting staff
- Ensuring young people are provided with clear information about Manchester Leaving Care Service from the outset of the Service's involvement with them, so that they can be clear about what is on offer and what to expect.
- Involvement of young people in the formulation of initial 'care' plans, following assessment, and thereafter periodically in the updating of these plans.
- Establishing a system of 'exit' interviews, whereby young people are offered the opportunity to reflect back on their experiences of the Service and offer constructive criticism, at the point their cases are to be made Inactive or Closed.
- Ensuring that young people are fully participating members of time limited initiatives – a piece of drama work, the establishment of a group or drop in, the painting of a mural etc etc – that the Service might establish.

- Ensuring young people have a direct voice and presence in any more formal structure that may be set up such as MLCS's Multi Agency Working Group on Leaving Care.
- Ensuring that young people are fully consulted and involved in any formal inspections of Manchester Leaving Care that might be undertaken by Barnardo's, Manchester Social Services, the SSI, the Audit Commission etc.

3. Complaints

a) General and in relation to Young People

▪ In keeping with Barnardo's organisational requirements, MLCS will follow Barnardo's nationally agreed Complaints Procedure for all Barnardo's' Services (see BART/LIVELINK for details). However as regards the local resolution of complaints under that Policy, MLCS will adopt the following procedure: -

- i) Information as to how young people can make complaints will be displayed in the public foyer of MLCS's office
- ii) Barnardo's basic leaflet 'Having Your Say' will also be available in MLCS's office foyer, as well as being routinely being given out to young people at the point they first receive a service from MLCS, and further copies at any appropriate point thereafter.
- iii) Information on how to complain will further be included in MLCS's Service Information Booklet for Young People which itself is routinely given out to all young people at the point they first access MLCS's Service, and occasionally at periodic intervals thereafter.
- iv) To constitute a 'complaint', the subject matter must be to do with a young person who is, or has been, receiving a service from MLCS, or be about any other aspect of MLCS's work, including staff or volunteers who work for MLCS.
- v) If the complaint concerns a young person, it must be made with that young person's knowledge and consent, and actively involve the young person throughout. In order to ensure this happens a 'complaint' will only be deemed a 'complaint' when: -
 - it is put in writing by the young person themselves or
 - it is put in writing by a third party, but is accompanied by the written consent of the young person that they are aware of the complaint and wish it to proceed or
 - a young person or a third party makes a verbal 'observation' and this is followed up by a visit from a MLCS Manager who helps the young person articulate their 'observation' to the point where it is put in writing, either by the young person themselves or the Manager writing the complaint and getting the young person to sign it.

- vi) To this end, if the initial 'observation' is made by a third party on behalf of the young person, letters and/or telephone calls will be made to both the young person and the third party so that one of the three written possibilities in v) above can be reached if that is what the young person wants.
- vii) Once the complaint is received, MLCS will acknowledge the receipt of that complaint in writing to the young person within 5 working days.
- viii) In most instances complaints concerning a young person will be looked into by the Service Delivery Team Manager who manages the Worker who deals with/last dealt with that case. In certain instances this may be inappropriate, and instead will be dealt with by another SDTM or the CSM. Complaints about a Manager will be dealt with by the CSM. Complaints about the CSM will be dealt with by the ADD.
- ix) Follow up, and investigation of, the complaint will take place within a further 10 working days. It will be usual in so doing for the SDTM/CSM to talk to all interested parties independently and look at any relevant supporting material.
- x) As far as is possible, an initial resolution to the complaint will be proposed by the SDTM/CSM within a further 15 working days (meaning the maximum this process should take is 30 working days and sooner if possible). A typical but not necessarily mandatory way of proposing the resolution will be for the SDTM/CSM to bring the parties together and explain their decision, with reasons.
- xi) However a resolution is proposed however, it will always be put in writing with a copy sent to the young person.
- xii) In any meeting(s) that may be held with the young person throughout the process, they will always have the right to be accompanied by a friend if they so wish. This friend will be whoever the young person chooses, though there will be an expectation that the friend themselves acts professionally throughout.
- xiii) In keeping with Barnardo's procedures, nothing in points i) to xii) above will preclude a young person going straight to Barnardo's Stage Two Formal Complaints Procedure without going through MLCS, or going to this Stage if dissatisfied with the outcome of having gone through MLCS's attempts at local resolution. It is hoped though that in the interests of all concerned as many complaints can be satisfactorily resolved at the local MLCS level as possible.

b) Complaints about the Service/more general MLCS issues

- Once again genuine attempts will be made to resolve such issues, if possible, at a local MLCS level.

- 'Complaints' will need to be put in writing.
- As a general rule, such complaints will be looked into by the CSM, within the same timescales and a similar process as a) above.

c) **Monitoring of complaints**

- Whichever Manager deals with a complaint will initially complete a CP1 Form 'Registering a Complaint for Local Resolution' – see Appendix A. Once the complaint has been dealt with, that Manager will also complete a CP2 Form 'Local Resolution of a Complaint' – See Appendix B. Both forms will then initially be passed to the CSM.
- The CSM will then confidentially file both forms in MLCS's Service User Exit Interview File, and include a general analysis of complaints received in the regular analysis of service user feedback that MLCS makes. Where the complaint relates to a MLCS Worker, the CSM will additionally copy the CP1 Form which describes this and pass it back to that Worker's SDTM, who in turn will confidentially file it on that Worker's MLCS Personnel File.

APPENDIX A

MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE

**CP1 : REGISTERING A COMPLAINT FOR LOCAL
RESOLUTION**

1. **Person making the Complaint**.....

.....

1A. **Date**.....

2. **Service User to Whom it relates (if appropriate)**

.....

3. **Age of Service User**.....

4. **Male / Female**

5. **Disabled Yes / No**

6. **Ethnicity**

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| A1 White British | <input type="checkbox"/> | C1 Asian/Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A2 White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> | C2 Asian/Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A3 White Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | C3 Asian/Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B1 White/Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | C4 Asian/other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B2 White/African | <input type="checkbox"/> | D1 Black/Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B3 White/Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> | D2 Black/African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B4 Other mixed background | <input type="checkbox"/> | D3 Black/Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Not Known | <input type="checkbox"/> | E1 Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | E2 Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. **MLCS Worker (if appropriate)**

.....

8. **What is seen as the Problem with the Service?**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Poor / inefficient service | <input type="checkbox"/> | Treatment by staff | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delay in providing service | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poor facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delay in providing information | <input type="checkbox"/> | Discrimination/Racism | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delay in getting answer/decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | General dissatisfaction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Failure/refusal to provide a service | <input type="checkbox"/> | with Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Something else | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. **Details** (Give as much information as possible; continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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10. **What would the complainant like done to put matters right?**

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11. **MLCS Manager completing form** (Print)

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12. **Complaints Reference Number** (MLCS / Date / Number)

.....

APPENDIX B

MANCHESTER LEAVING CARE SERVICE

CP2 – LOCAL RESOLUTION OF A COMPLAINT

1. **Complaints Reference Number (MLCS / Date / Number)**

.....

2. **What Best Describes the Outcome of the Complaint**

Upheld Not Upheld Partly Upheld Withdrawn

3. **What Resolutions have been offered?**

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.....

.....

4. **What Resolution has been agreed?**

.....

.....

.....

5. **What Best describes the Resolution of the Complaint?**

Acceptable to the Complainer

Partly acceptable to the Complainer

Not acceptable

6. **MLCS Manager** (Print).....

7. **Date**