



Slough Children First - Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

Policy Owner:	Yemi Ukwenu - Registered Manager
Version:	1.1
Date:	October 2022
Review Date:	October 2024

Policy Summary:

This procedure outlines the process for how the IFA manages comments, compliments and complaints.



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be
..... Safe, Secure and Successful

Contents

Our Approach 3
Comments 3
Compliments 3
Complaints 4
Whistleblowing 5
Useful Contacts 6

Our approach

At SCF IFA we aim to:

- Provide the highest standard of care to the children within our service
- To maintain positive working relationships with children's families and the professionals we work with
- To create a positive working environment for our carers and staff team

We promote a culture where children, carers, families and other professionals are encouraged to express their views and concerns and know they will be actively listened to and that we will work restoratively towards a resolution. Children, families, carers and staff are reminded about their right to complain and are given information on how this can be done and what happens afterwards in their welcome pack.

Comments, compliments and complaints are an important part of helping us to shape the services developed and delivered by SCF IFA fulfil these aims so we value this feedback immensely. We are committed to listening and responding professionally to any feedback and where needed taking action to meet the needs of children, carers, families and other professionals.

Comments

Sometimes people may wish to give feedback but do not feel it fits into either a complaint or compliment category. We are more than happy to receive this kind of feedback and you can share this in a number of ways:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager. You can contact the duty worker and/or duty manager on 01753 690960.
- Write us a letter or email.
- Speak to a member of staff/manager directly.

In addition to informal feedback, we will formally request feedback at least annually from anyone involved in SCF IFA. In addition, we will seek to capture the voice of the child, carers, families and other professionals at significant times in the child's journey i.e., in advance of a Looked After Children's Review and during the foster carers annual review process. This feedback will inform the development of our annual service plan. We aim to ensure that everyone's views are considered and to address any issues that have been raised.

Compliments

It is always nice to hear when we are getting things right as this is the fundamental aim of all we do at SCF IFA. We also want to work in partnership with those that use our services to build upon good practice and create an environment where people feel heard and listened to and can see the impact of their voice on service delivery and development. Compliments can be shared in the same way as comments:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager. You can contact the duty worker and/or duty manager on 01753 690960

- Write us a letter or email
- Speak to a member of staff/manager directly

Complaints

At SCF IFA we aim to offer the highest standard of service, should anyone feel we have not achieved this then we want them to let us know. This enables us to address the issue and where needed make changes to ensure that we can improve our practice. Complaints can be made in several ways:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager
- Write us a letter at Slough Children First, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2EL, or email us at one of the email addresses below.
- Come into the office and speak to a member of staff/manager directly
- Once we have received a complaint the following process will be followed:

1. Stage One

Your complaint will be sent to the Registered Manager or Practice Manager of the Independent Fostering Agency. You need to give as much detail as possible as this will help us investigate your complaint.

You should receive an acknowledgement within two working days and a reply within 10 working days.

If you are unhappy with your stage one reply, you can ask for your complaint to be considered at stage two by the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual.

2. Stage Two

Your stage two complaint needs to be in writing, stating which aspects of the previous reply you are not happy with and what more you think we should do. Your complaint at Stage Two will be considered by the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual.

This must be received within 20 working days from the date of the stage one reply.

You should receive an acknowledgement within two working days and a reply within 10 working days.

3. Stage Three

If you are still unhappy with your stage two reply, you can ask the chief executive to review your complaint. You need to explain in writing which aspects of the previous response you are not happy with and what more you think we should do.

Your stage three complaint must be received within 20 working days from the date of the stage two reply.

You should receive an acknowledgement within two working days and the aim is to reply within 20 working days.

If we cannot respond fully within that time, we will contact you, explain why and let you know when you will receive a full response.

Your stage three request should be sent to complaints@SCFrust.co.uk or to:

Slough Children First
Observatory House
25 Windsor Road
Slough, Berkshire
SL1 2EL

4. The complaint will be fully logged, including the outcome in the complaints file.

Should the complainant not be happy with the response to their complaint they should immediately report this. The investigation will then be reviewed and the complainant can take their complaint to Ofsted (details provided below).

If the complaint relates to the manager, then the Responsible Individual and the ELT (Executive Leadership Team) will investigate the complaint. We understand that children may find it difficult to make a complaint, especially about those who care for them or provide them with support. For this reason, we provide every child and foster carer with free post postcards which they can use to write complaints or compliments on and post using Royal Mail. At a suitable time, children are encouraged to talk about their complaints with an adult of their choice and/or the manager and can also be offered an Advocate.

In their placements children also have access to a phone which they can use to complain to an outside service such as the placing authority, Ofsted or Child Line. All carers must ensure that the children have the freedom to use the phone to make a call of this nature.

In addition, we ensure that all children have regular and unsupervised contact with someone external to the home e.g., their social worker, relatives (where appropriate), independent visitor. This allows them the space to talk openly with someone if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care.

Children are reminded of how to complain during day-to-day discussions, in children's meetings and details of how they can do this are contained within the Children's Guide which they have a copy of.

Whistleblowing

As an employee of SCF IFA or SCF foster carer, if you believe that the service itself or an individual working or fostering for SCF IFA is involved in any wrongdoing such as:

1. Committing a criminal offence
2. Failing to comply with a legal obligation
3. Endangering the health and safety of an individual
4. Environmental damage
5. Concealing any information relating to the above

You should in the first instance report your concerns to a Manager, Registered Manager or Responsible Individual. The same process as used with complaints will be followed to ensure that the matter is dealt with efficiently and in a sensitive way.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 prevents you from suffering a detriment or having your contract/agreement terminated for 'whistle-blowing' and SCF IFA fully supports this approach. We will ensure that in dealing with the reported issue you are protected and supported to ensure you feel safe and happy within your role.

Our approach at SCF IFA is built on restorative practice to ensure that all carers and staff feel able to discuss their views with managers and to feel confident that they will be protected and supported. However, if you are not happy with the response that you receive or you feel unable to report it to the manager or director then you should raise the matter with the appropriate external body e.g., Ofsted, Police, Environment Agency, Local Authority.

Useful Contacts

Head of Regulated Services: Saima Arif
Tel: 01753 690960
Email: saima.arif@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Registered Manager: Yemi Ukwenu
Tel: 01753 690960
Email: yemi.ukwenu@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Practice Manager: George Mathew
Tel: 01753 690960
Email: george.mathew@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Interim Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services: Andrew Fraser
Email: andrew.fraser@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

If you wish to complain to an external body, please contact:

- Ofsted Regulator for Children's Social Care Services
SCF IFA URN: 1183495
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 123 1231

- Child Line – 0800 1111
- NSPCC - 0808 800 500



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be

..... Safe, Secure and Successful



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be

..... Safe, Secure and Successful