

Complaints and Process Policy

Version	Date	Review: Bi-annual	Reviewer	Reasons for changes
1.6	10.07.19			Updated Document
2.0	23.01.20		AD	Final
2.0	15.02.22		PC	Final
2.0	15.02.24		PC	Final
2.0	15.02.26		PC	Final

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We recognise that the church members and all those who visit the Dream Centre Manchester (DCM) or any of our church activities have the right to expect high quality services. We also appreciate that from time to time there may be occasions when users of our services feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect. Continued goodwill is greatly valued and we expect to resolve any day to day difficulties or complaints informally and as quickly as possible. In the first instance we would ask the concerned person to raise any complaint directly with the church member concerned as appropriate. If this does not meet expectations, then this complaints policy will apply.

2. Scope

- 2.1. We understand that a complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about an action, or lack of action by a person acting on behalf of the church, or about the policies and procedures of the church.

We (the Church Council) will consider any complaint using the procedures set out below.

The complaint could be about:

- conduct of our leadership and/or some or all members of our church,
- the standard of service we provide,
- discrimination,
- provision of inaccurate information, or
- poor administration including delays in responding to enquiries.

3. Purpose

- 3.1. What is the purpose of the policy?

- To protect the interests of all church users and visitors
- To improve the quality of services we provide by responding to the views and needs of people affected
- To enable church users and visitors to propose improvements to our ways of working
- To protect our Pastor(s), leaders and church members
- To provide a means of monitoring our performance.

- 3.2. The leadership and Church Council should be familiar with the process. Complaints against the pastor(s) should be passed to the Church Council.

4. Safeguarding

- 4.1. If a complaint or grievance relates to or includes an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed or is at risk of harm, or that an adult or another child may have caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult, it must be responded to through the Safeguarding Policy for handling allegations of abuse.

5. Records

- 5.1. All complaints should be recorded by the Church Council in the appropriate file and kept with Church Council Minutes. Details should include the nature of the complaint and the date received, the process followed and the action taken and any outcomes including further follow-up. The Chair will keep the Church Council informed of the number and nature of complaints, and the outcomes. S/he will report on this at least annually.

6. Complaints Procedure

How is a complaint dealt with?

- 6.1. **Step 1 - Informal Procedure**

The aim always, when responding to complaints and grievances, is to enable them to be resolved informally, speedily and fairly by mutual discussion.

- i) The person making the complaint in the first instance should speak to the person(s) they believe responsible for the area of dissatisfaction or disquiet, which will hopefully be resolved in this way.
- ii) A note should be agreed at the end of the discussion, summarising the complaint, the date and who was involved and the agreed outcome, and passed to a member of the Leadership team to ensure lessons are learned by the church
- iii) If the complainant is still not satisfied, they should move to Step 2: the Formal Procedure.

6.2. Step 2 - Formal Procedure

- i) The complaint should be made in writing (or by email), marked 'confidential', to the Pastor, who will acknowledge, in writing (or by email), within ten working days, the receipt of the complaint. If the complaint is about the Incumbent, the complaint should be addressed to the Trustees.
- ii) The receiver of the complaint will investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint and will communicate the results of the investigation to the complainant within a reasonable time, normally within 20 working days of the complaint being received. If the investigation includes a meeting with the complainant, s/he may be accompanied or supported by a friend, but not a legal representative.
- iii) If the complaint is found to be justified, the investigator will agree any further action with the complainant.
- iv) A note should be agreed at that point, summarising the complaint, the date and who was involved and the agreed outcome, and passed to a member of the Church Council to ensure lessons are learned by the church
- v) If the complainant is still not satisfied, they should move to Step 3: Appeal.

6.3. Step 3 - Appeal.

- i) The complainant will have the right – if dissatisfied with the results of Step 2 – to put their case, in writing (or by email), to an Appeal Panel of no less than three members, which will include at least one trustee and should be addressed via the trustees (Church Council).
- ii) If the appeal is found to be justified, the Appeal Panel will agree any necessary further action with the complainant.
- iii) The response will be confirmed in writing (or by email) within ten days of the meeting held to hear it.
- iv) A note should be agreed at that point, summarising the complaint, the date and who was involved and the agreed outcome, and passed to a member of the Leadership Team to ensure lessons are learned by the Church.
- v) The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and no further appeal is possible.

7. Initial Contact

7.1. If you have a complaint, contact:

The Pastor (or Chair of Trustees) of the Dream Centre Manchester
King Street, Droylsden M43 6AN

7.2. Email: admin@thedreamcentre.co.uk

7.3. Please do also let us know if you are happy with the Dream Centre Manchester services.

8. When your complaint cannot be resolved

8.1. Where we have exhausted all avenues and the complainant is still dissatisfied, they may contact the Charity Commission as follows:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>