

## **KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION TRUST**

### **COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd (Charity) is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The Charity operates four different departments: Brockwood Park School, Inwoods Small School, Krishnamurti Centre, Foundation.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the board of trustees of the Charity. This responsibility has been delegated to staff members in different stages outlined below.

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

#### **SCOPE**

The Charity already has a complaint policy in place for its services at the school and for its fundraising. The Charity runs a retreat centre for adults. The Foundation has a passive presence online and makes available the work of Krishnamurti free of charge for use of anybody interested. It also publishes Krishnamurti books with reputable publishers and sell its books in a small bookshop at the Centre and online.

The Charity wishes to improve its services and offerings and therefore we take into account and attend to legitimate problems, concerns, worries or suggestions.

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by an individual who has been directly affected by an action, service, or decision of the Foundation and who is seeking a personal remedy. Matters raised where there is no direct personal impact on the individual, or where no personal remedy is sought, will not be treated as complaints. Such matters may be regarded as general feedback or concerns and considered at the discretion of the Charity. Engagement with or response to available publications, recordings, or online materials disseminated by the Foundation does not, of itself, constitute being directly affected for the purposes of this policy.

This policy outlines three stages for handling complaints and also includes information about Charity Commission as an external stage.

#### **INFORMAL STAGE**

Complaint and concerns can be shared with any staff member of the Charity. The staff have been trained on this policy and the Charity's approach to addressing concerns and complaints. The staff member endeavours to address the compliant/concern as soon as possible and no more than 10 working days.

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### **FORMAL – STAGE 1**

We hope that we are able to resolve your complaint informally. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal stage, you can write to the Centre Coordinators for Centre and Foundation matters and to the Bursar for the charity wide matters.

For the complaint to be considered at this stage, it should be put in writing, via email or letter, and should include your name, address and contact telephone number in your email or letter so that we can get back in touch with you easily. Please feel free when contacting us about a complaint, to let us know how you think it could be resolved. We want to reach the best possible outcome and two heads are better than one.

We endeavour to respond fully and conclusively to complaints at this stage within twenty term-time working days. However, you will receive an acknowledgement of your complaint within the ten term-time working days of receipt of your complaint. Wherever possible we will deal with it more quickly, if we think it will take longer we will let you know.

From experience we have found that, even at this stage, the best way to resolve a problem quickly is by telephone. This way we can make sure that we fully understand the issue and can gather all of the information that we need to resolve the problem in a fast and effective way.

In more complex situations where an immediate response is not possible, the Centre Coordinators or the Bursar will investigate the matter and get back to you as quickly as they can.

The Centre Coordinators or the Bursar will log the complaint in the Charity's formal complaint log. The log includes the date the complaint was received, the person making the complaints, the complaint and the outcome. The Chair of Governors will be informed of formal complaints at this stage.

### **FORMAL – STAGE 2**

If after going the above stage with the Centre Coordinators or the Bursar, you are still unhappy then you can write to the Head of Centre and Foundation.

For the complaint to be considered at this stage, it should be put in writing, via email or letter, and should include your name, address and contact telephone number in your email or letter so that we can get back in touch with you easily. Please outline the details of the complaint, why you have not been satisfied with our response up to now and what you would like us to do to put things right.

At this stage, the Head of Centre and Foundation and a member from the School Management Committee will review the complaint and the steps taken in the informal stage and formal stage 1. They endeavour to respond fully and conclusively to complaints at this stage within thirty term-time working days. However, you will receive an acknowledgement of your complaint within the ten Term-time working days of receipt of your complaint. Wherever possible we

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will deal with it more quickly, if we think it will take longer we will let you know. They might contact you to get more information and make sure they understand your concerns and why the above stages haven't addressed it. After they reviewed the information they have and any new information they have received/gathered, they will respond to your complaint within ten working days. The Charity's Complaint log will be updated to reflect that the complaint has reached this stage and the outcome. The Chair of Governors will be kept informed of the second stage process from the beginning till its final outcome.

### **EXTERNAL STAGE**

If you feel that your complaint has been unresolved by us, you can contact The Charity Commission at the address below.

The Charity Commission  
PO Box 1227  
Liverpool  
L69 3UG  
0845 3000 218  
[www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

### **OCCASIONS WHEN WE CHOSE NOT TO RESPOND TO A COMPLAINT**

From time to time we receive complaints that do not relate directly to something that Charity has done or that we are not in a position to comment on. We are a small charity with limited resources and we must use these in the best way possible. This can mean not engaging in lengthy debates on issues that are unrelated to Charity's work.

There may be occasions when we chose not to respond to a complaint at all. These include:

- When a complaint is about something that the Charity has no direct connection to. We may choose to reply to clear our name but we are not obliged to.
- When someone unreasonably pursues a complaint that we have already responded to. They will be given escalation points but we may choose not to reply again, we will always inform you of our decision to do this.
- When a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudiced or offensive in their manner.
- When a complainant is harassing a staff member.
- When a complaint is incoherent or illegible.
- When a complaint has clearly been sent to us and numerous other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email. In this instance we can choose whether it is necessary for us to reply or not.

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- The Charity cannot respond to complaints made anonymously. However, we will investigate the complaint and use the information to improve in any way that we can.

### **VARIATIONS OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage Two review.