



Complaints Policy and Procedure

The following complaints policy and procedure is in keeping with Kalmer Counselling's ethos.

Principles:

Kalmer's intention is to achieve the very best service for each client in an ethos of care and respect based upon its mission and vision statements. It is recognised there is an essential relationship with client, home, and School in realising these aims.

Wherever possible concerns about the service Kalmer Counselling provides will be resolved by informal means. As always, employees do their best for all clients. Anyone who has concerns should first discuss the matter with Kalmer. This procedure will be invoked only when all informal means have been unsuccessful and the person raising the concern wishes to make a formal complaint.

The Stages of Complaints Stage 1:

Complaint heard by a member of staff the director, will write to the complainant enclosing a Complaint Form. Once returned, a member of staff (not the subject of the complaint or involved) will be assigned (impartially and objectively, and keeping accurate notes) to:

- Meet with the complainant or contact them to establish:
- What has happened so far and who has been involved
- The nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- What the complainant feels would put things right
- Interview those involved in the matter and those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- All efforts will be made to arrive at a fair appraisal
- Areas of agreement and of misunderstanding will be noted
- Identify steps to resolve the issues, communicating and acting upon them in a positive, reassuring manner. These may include:
- An explanation which warrants no further action
- An apology
- An acknowledgement that the matter could have been handled differently
- A description of steps to be taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of this complaint

Stage 2: Complaint heard by Director or appropriate person

If the complainant is not satisfied, the matter will be referred to the Director, who will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint
- Evaluate the substance of the matter, obtaining additional information if necessary
- Determine whether Stage 1 was handled appropriately
- Decide upon further action if necessary
- Inform the complainant and those involved

Stage 3: Complaint heard by Appeal Panel and If the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she must write to BACP giving details of the complaint.

- The aim is to consider the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the Service and the complainant
- If not possible, the Panel will establish the facts and assure the complainant that the complaint has been taken seriously
- The complainant will be invited
- Others involved may be invited if the Panel considers this helpful
- The meeting will be clerked

Roles for Stage 3 • The Minute taker will:

- Set the time, date and venue, giving between five and ten days notice
- Collate papers and send them to all parties in advance
- Record the proceedings
- Notify all parties of the Panel's decision

The Chair of the Panel will:

- Explain the remit of the panel to all parties
- Check that no Panel member has had any involvement or has any vested interest
- Maintain a tone of courtesy and respect in keeping with Kalmer counselling
- Give each party the opportunity to put the case and ask questions
- Ensure that issues are addressed
- Identify key findings based upon fact
- See that the minute taker notifies all parties of the Panel's decision in writing within five days

Checklist for the Panel Hearing

The panel needs to take the following points into account:

- The hearing is as informal as possible
- Witnesses are only required to attend for that part of the hearing in which they give their evidence
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain the complaint, and call his/her witnesses where required
- The Director may question both the complainant and the witnesses after they have spoken
- The Director is then invited to explain the Kalmers actions and call any witnesses
- The complainant may question both the Director and the witnesses after each has spoken
- The panel may ask questions at any point
- The complainant is then invited to sum up his/her complaint
- The Director is then invited to sum up Kalmer actions and response to the complaint
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues
- Both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale

Conclusion

Kalmer counselling hopes this procedure will not be needed. For the very rare occasion when it is, it will be followed faithfully and objectively. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Director will inform her/him that the procedure has been followed and is now closed.

Kalmer counselling Notification of Complaint

Please complete and return to the Director or counselling manager who will acknowledge receipt and explain how this matter will be dealt with.

Your name:
Clients name:
Address:
Postcode:
Day time telephone number:
Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint:
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork if so please give details?

Signature:

Date:

For Service use only

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: