



Mevagh Family Resource Centre Feedback & Complaints Policy

Document:	Feedback & Complaints Policy
What is this?	This is Mevagh Family Resource Centre's (Mevagh FRC) current Feedback & Complaints Policy
CRA Code Sections:	6.4, 6.8
Use of Document:	Directors of Mevagh FRC - CRA Compliance
Date Approved:	This Policy was approved by the Voluntary Board of Directors of Mevagh FRC at its meeting 14.10.2024
Review Date:	This Policy will be reviewed on 14.10.2027 by the Voluntary Board of Directors of Mevagh FRC.

Background – Who We Are

Mevagh FRC was established to combat disadvantage and our goal is to have ‘an inclusive, well informed, active and participating community, where the family unit is supported, safe and secure at the core of its work at all times. Mevagh Family Resource Centre has an anti-poverty focus, the project promotes social inclusion of those people who are most marginalised in society – women in the home, people parenting alone, early school leavers, unemployed people, children, young people, non-nationals and people with disabilities.

The Family Resource Centre offers a safe and impartial environment for people to meet and interact. It provides for early intervention, i.e. youth activities, support groups, education/training, and health workshops. We try to remove barriers and fear of taking that first step towards education or leading a happier and healthier lifestyle. We encourage people to become more informed and active and share experiences by networking.

Statement of Policy

Mevagh FRC is committed to dealing effectively with any feedback or complaints you may have about our organisation. If we got something wrong, we will apologise and where possible we will try to put things right. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our supports & services. Mevagh FRC acknowledges that both the complainant and Mevagh FRC, as a community organisation, have an equal voice and are of equal importance in our complaints process. The emphasis will be on a positive resolution of complaints informally where possible.

Policy Principles

Mevagh FRC is committed to the following principles when an individual wishes to give feedback or make a complaint to us. We will:

- Make sure all necessary personnel in Mevagh FRC treats feedback or a complaint seriously and knows what to do if feedback or a complaint is received.
- Provide a fair and easy process for anyone wishing to give feedback or to make a complaint.
- Publicise and raise awareness of our procedures so that people know how to give feedback or make a complaint.
- Make sure confidentiality is upheld when giving feedback or making a complaint.
- Ensure complaints are dealt with and investigated in a timely manner.
- Endeavour to resolve a complaint and restore relations.
- Learn from feedback/complaints: gather information which helps us to review and improve our service.

Scope of Policy

This policy and procedures relate to giving feedback to Mevagh FRC and to both informal and formal complaints made to Mevagh FRC and the steps to be followed if you wish to give feedback or make a complaint. This policy does not cover complaints made by staff as this is managed through Mevagh FRC Grievance Policy & Procedure.

What is complaint/feedback

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from any person(s) about an organisation’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the organisation.

Feedback is information received by an organisation from any person(s) about their experience of any aspect of an organisation’s services or of how these services are provided.

Feedback that is critical of Mevagh FRC and requires a response is dealt with in the complaints section of this policy.

Who can give feedback or make a complaint

- Participants availing of our training courses/programmes.
- People seeking information from Mevagh FRC.
- People who avail of a support/service operating within Mevagh FRC.
- Service providers or agencies Mevagh FRC does business with.

Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated, as there is always the possibility that they are vexatious or malicious and the anonymity of the complainant would not enable the principle of natural justice and procedural fairness to be upheld.

When to use this Policy

When you give feedback or complain to us, we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes, you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by us such as decisions by our funders or other statutory agencies we engage with, and we will then advise you about how to make your concerns known.

How to provide Feedback to Us

You may wish to provide feedback to Mevagh FRC where you have a comment or compliment you wish to share and have noted. You can provide feedback in any of the ways below:

- You can email us at coordinator@mevaghfrc.com or evabyrne77@gmail.com (Chairperson)
- You can write a letter to us at the following address:

FAO: Project Manager or The Chairperson
Mevagh Family Resource Centre
Áras Ros Goill
Downings
Co. Donegal F92 RX8C

Compliments which mention an individual member of staff will also be sent to that staff member. All feedback will be acknowledged where you include your name and address or email address.

Informal Resolution of a Complaint

If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things as soon as possible and in the easiest and most direct way. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He/She/They will try to resolve it for you there and then. However, they may need time to look into it and will respond to you within five working days.

If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your complaint, the member of staff will draw them to our attention. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why, and you can then ask for your complaint to be formally investigated.

How to Complain Formally

You can make a complaint in any of the ways below:

- You can ask for a copy of our complaint form (Appendix 1) from the person with whom you are already in contact.
- You can e mail us at coordinator@mevaghfrc.com or evabyrne77@gmail.com (Chairperson)
- You can write a letter to us at the following address:

FAO: Project Manager or The Chairperson
Mevagh Family Resource Centre
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What should you include in Your Complaint

- Remember to state your name, address and telephone number (and email, if applicable) and whether you are acting on behalf of someone else.
- Briefly describe what your complaint is about stating relevant dates and times, if applicable.
- List your specific concerns starting with the most important concern.
- Be clear about what you are hoping to achieve (for example an apology, explanation, etc.).
- State your preferred method of communication.

It will assist us if extra information and/or copies of relevant documents are attached to your complaint.

Dealing with Your Complaint

- We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.
- We will ask you to tell us how you would like us to communicate with you and establish whether you have any requirements for example, if you have language difficulties.
- We will deal with your complaint in an open and honest way.
- We will make sure that your interactions with us in the future do not suffer just because you have made a complaint.

If you are making a complaint on behalf of somebody else, we will need their agreement to you acting on their behalf.

Investigation

- We will tell you who we have asked to investigate your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, we will usually ask somebody from the service to look into it and get back to you. In some cases, if the complaint is serious, we may ask someone from outside the organisation to investigate.
- We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right. We will also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for.
- The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint. If you don't want this to happen, it is important that you tell us.
- If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you if you are happy to accept this.
- We will aim to resolve concerns as quickly as possible and expect to deal with the vast majority within 30 working days.
- If your complaint is more complex, we will:
 - a. Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate.
 - b. Tell you how long we expect it to take.
 - c. Give you regular updates every 20 working days on any progress made.

The person who is investigating your concerns will aim first to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. In complex cases, we will draw up an investigation plan.

In some instances, we may ask to meet you to discuss your complaint. Occasionally, we might suggest mediation or another method to try to resolve disputes.

When investigating your complaint, we will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, emails or whatever may be relevant to your complaint. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any guidance.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication. This could be by letter or email, for example.

If necessary, we will produce a longer report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what and why it happened. If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we got it wrong, we will always apologise.

What We expect from You

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. However, we also consider that our staff have the same rights. We, therefore, expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence.

Ombudsman

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is independent and can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining:

- Have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on our part.
- Have been disadvantaged personally by a service failure.

The Ombudsman expects you to bring your complaint to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by:

Telephone: 01 6395600 Lo-Call: 1890223030

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.ie

Website: www.ombudsman.ie

Writing to: The Office of the Ombudsman
18 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2

Review:

This policy will be reviewed in three years or sooner, if required.

Signed: Lois Byrne (Chairperson)

Date: 14 / 10 / 24

Signed: A. Healy (Director)

Date: 14 / 10 / 24

Revision History

Revision No.	Approval Date	Document Reference & Changes Made	Name

Appendix 1 COMPLAINT FORM

A: Your details

Surname

Forename(s)

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/if other please state:

Address

Your email address

Daytime phone number

Mobile number

Please state by which of the above methods you would like us to contact you.

Your requirements

If our usual way of dealing with complaints is difficult for you, please tell us so that we can discuss how we might help you.

The person who experienced the problem should normally fill in this form. If you are filling this in on behalf of someone else, please fill in Section B. Please note that before taking forward the complaint we will need to satisfy ourselves that you have the authority to act on behalf of the person concerned.

B: Making a complaint on behalf of someone else: Their details:

Their name in full

Their address

What is your relationship to them?

Why are you making a complaint on their behalf?

C: About your complaint (Please continue your answers to the following questions on a separate sheet(s) if necessary).

What do you think we did wrong, or failed to do?

Describe how you personally or the person you are representing suffered or has been affected.

What do you think should be done to put things right?

Have you already put your concern to the staff member responsible for delivering the service? If so, please give brief details of how and when you did so.

If you have any documents to support your concern/complaint, please attach them with this form.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

When you have completed this form, please send it to:

FAO: Project Manager or The Chairperson
Mevagh Family Resource Centre
Áras Ros Goill
Downings
Co. Donegal F92 RX8C