

---

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

**Valid until October 2024**

bMindful Psychology Copyright

This document and its content is copyright of bMindful Psychology 2021. All rights reserved.

Any redistribution or reproduction of part or all of the contents in any form is prohibited other than the following:

- You may print or download to a bMindful Psychology hard disk extracts for bMindful Psychology work purposes only
- You may not, except with our express written permission, distribute or commercially exploit the content. Nor may you transmit it or store it in any other website or other form of electronic retrieval system.

---

## **Mission Statement**

bMindful Psychology is an organisation that provides consultancy and training, specialising in clinical therapeutic Intervention for children and young people recovering from trauma. bMindful Psychology offers a wide range of specialist psychological therapy services to support children, young people and adolescents.

## Definition of Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more people about the standard of service provided by bMindful Psychology.

This may include dissatisfaction about, but not limited to:

- The standards and quality of service delivered
- The actions or inactions of any member of bMindful's staff
- The ethos and environment of our service
- A lack of response to concerns raised

bMindful's policy also allows for customers, clients, family members and others involved with children, to make both minor and major complaints. Any team member who has a concern should raise this matter with their line manager in the first instance or raise a complaint via the Grievance Procedure as set out in the Company Handbook.

## Aims

Our primary aim is making sure that everyone, children, parents, customers and others, have and feel confident in the complaints process and that we take their complaint/concerns seriously.

Our service aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints. When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an appropriate individual. Where and when necessary we will and can commission an independent person to investigate a complaint. In such a situation the decision will be made by the company's Directors.
- Address all the points identified within the complaint and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality, although if the complaint relates to a safeguarding matter the complainants will be informed of our duty to safeguard children and young people and therefore the information will need to be shared with the relevant agencies in line with our Safeguarding, Privacy, Confidentiality and Whistleblowing policies.
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy, where the complainant is a child/young person it is important that we take account of their age, understanding and ability.
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of our registered professional bodies, the need to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare and in line with any regulatory requirements.
- Keep complainants informed at all stages of the complaints process including any delays.
- We will use the learning and outcomes from complaints to assist us to develop and improve our practice.

Our aim is to resolve all concerns and complaints in a timely manner and through informal process wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

### **How to complain**

Should a complaint be raised formally, then the stage 1 procedure should be followed (see below)

Complaints may be made anonymously or in person, verbally or in writing, to the Office Manager at bMindful's Psychology Head Office at:

**Hobart House, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle, SK8 3SR**

Complaints can be e-mailed to Head Office via [michelle@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk](mailto:michelle@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk), [stuart@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk](mailto:stuart@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk), [karen@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk](mailto:karen@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk) or [info@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk](mailto:info@bmindfulpsychology.co.uk)

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **The investigating Officer:**

This is the individual appointed to investigate the complaint/concerns and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report. This report will address the issues investigated and include any learning and or recommendation for improvement.

The investigating officer will:

- Be the contact point for the complainant, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints meetings if considered relevant
- Arrange the complaint hearing
- Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of any hearing

## Principles for investigation

When investigating a complaint/concern, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

## Time scales

Where a complaint is from a child/young person this will be addressed within 7 working days of the complaint being received. They will be told if there are any delays. This is because a child/young person may not fully understand why their complaint is taking a long time to be resolved. Furthermore, a child/young person, may not want to complain at the time the incident happened and we must be sensitive to this.

All other complaints will be addressed within 14 working days. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents this may require a longer time to investigate. In the event of any such delays the complainant is kept informed and up to date of the progress of the investigation into their complaint.

It is important that any complaint is raised without delay and within a reasonable timeframe. In this case three (3) months. However, we will consider an exception to this time frame in circumstances where there are valid reasons for not raising the complaint at the time (such as sickness, safeguarding concerns managed under safeguarding procedures) and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

If at any point we cannot meet the time scales set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

## The Investigation Process

### Stage 1

Upon receipt of a formal complaint the Investigating Officer will then do the following:

- Log the complaint into the Complaints File.
- Acknowledge the complaint via a letter
- Hold an initial fact finding meeting with the complainant and record this.
- Most complaints can be resolved at this stage. If the complaint is resolved at Stage 1, the complainant will be asked to sign a record of the meeting as an indication of their agreement with the outcome. They will be given a copy of the signed minutes and the Company will retain the original.
- The complaints form will clearly indicate “Informal Resolution Agreed”.
- The complaints log will then be completed with the outcomes.

- If the complaint is not resolved informally the investigating officer will carry out any subsequent checks / speak to any other staff, customer or young people as required and then agree an outcome.
- An outcome letter will be sent to the complainant with a comments page to be returned to Head Office.
- Stage 1 should be completed within 7 or 14 working days from the receipt of the complaint.
- If the complainant is not happy with the outcome, this is then referred to stage 2.

## Stage 2

Upon initiation of a stage 2 enquiry, the Office Manager will liaise with the company Directors:

- A nominated investigating officer will look at the complaint
- Further investigations may take place, with all previous paperwork perused thoroughly.
- Stage 2 should be completed within 14 working days of its initiation, and in total a maximum of 28 days from the start of Stage 1. A further outcome letter will be sent to the complainant with a comments page to be returned to Head Office.
- If the complainant is still not happy with the outcome at Stage 2, it will be referred to Stage 3.

## Stage 3

The complainant will be advised of their rights to go to an independent body and the complainant will be supported throughout the process.

## General Notes

Throughout the stages, all investigations carried out will be documented, recorded and copied, to be placed into the complaints file with the complaint as evidence.

Any meetings / discussions held must be signed and dated by all parties involved.

At any time during the complaint investigation complainants have the right to:

- Withdraw the complaint at any stage
- Refer the complaint to the police
- Refer the complaint to an independent body

Complaint outcomes can be of 3 categories:

- **Upheld** - there is evidence to support the complaint
- **Partially Upheld** - there is evidence to support aspects of the complaint
- **Not Upheld** - there is no evidence to support the complaint

If the complaint raises any safeguarding concern then this should be managed via our Safeguarding Policy/Procedure. Concerns about staff conduct may be addressed by the bMindful Psychology Disciplinary and Grievance processes and where necessary involve the notification of the appropriate professional body such as HCPC or BACP.

**Record of review:**

Policies are reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. However, where there are changes to legislation/guidance or in response to recommendations from any significant incidents, a review of the policies will take place immediately. Key Safeguarding policies are reviewed annually as a minimum.

Reason for update	Date of review	Reviewed by