Centre for Young Refugees and Migrants

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY

2026 version

Terms, Acronyms

Service Users

To include all children, young people and vulnerable adults who access Dost's services

Staff

To include all staff, self employed freelance workers, coaches, tutors, student placements, volunteers who work/ volunteer at Dost

Trustees

To include all Dost Trustees

Management

To include the Director and Board of Trustees

Visitors

To include all visitors, funders, staff, volunteers and coaches from other organisations

Carers

To include all parents/ extended family/ foster carers, keyworkers, corporate parents, such as Children's Services

The Public

To include members of the public who may come into contact with Dost services or Service Users

Named Leads

Director – Marian Spiers (marian@dostcentre.co.uk/ 07852855711/ www.dostcentre.co.uk)

Designated Safeguarding Lead – DSL

Marian Spiers (updated Nov 2025)
Carl Reyes (completed Dec 2024)

First Aider at Work

Marian Spiers (updated June 2024)

Emergency First Aiders

Emad Hamid (June 2024)
Kelly Williams (July 2024)
Carl Reyes (Dec 2024)

Mental Health First Aider

Marian Spiers (Feb 2025)

Data Protection Officer

Marian Spiers

Safety and Safeguarding Trustee

Thomas Edwards (DSL Trained March 2026)

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

Introduction

Dost has been operating as an independent charity since 2017 and are very proud that we have not received any formal complaints in this time. We do our best to make our services open, accessible, transparent and make Dost a safe, welcoming, fair and equitable place for everyone.

However, we do know that from time to time there may be issues that concern people, so we are very keen to learn and to rapidly rectify mistakes. This policy is designed to ensure that you know you will be heard if you have a concern, or do wish to complain and to know how this will be dealt with.

All staff, service users, carers, corporate parents, trustees and the public have the right to raise a concern, complaint or give feedback about our service and have this thoroughly and fairly looked into and actioned.

We believe that having an effective system in place helps us to understand how our service is perceived from others' points of view and improve it.

It helps us monitor quality issues and inform any future decisions that we make regarding our service.

Stage 1 - Informal Process

For most concerns, there could be a simple explanation, or something that can be quickly rectified by the Director / Board of Trustees. In the first instance, you should raise any issue with the Director or Chair of the Board. They will seek to understand the issue and resolve it informally with you if they can, letting you know any action they will take, and thanking you for raising the matter.

We would hope that this would address any day to day concerns quickly and fairly most of the time.

Stage 2 - Formal Process

If the concern or complaint is more serious - or if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal stage - you can raise a formal concern/ complaint and the next stage is for the issue to be made a formal complaint and for you and we to follow the procedure below.

Procedure

When responding to formal, verbal complaints, the following details need to be noted:

- Identify the name and contact details of the complainant
- Obtain any information necessary to understand the nature of the concern/complaint
- Ensure that the Concerns/ Complaints Form is completed [see Appendix 2]
- Pass the completed form to the Director or Trustees as soon as possible

When responding to written complaints:

- Ensure that the Concerns/ Complaints Form is completed as above (attaching the written complaint to the form)
- Pass this to the Director or Trustees as soon as possible

The Director or Trustees are then responsible for receiving these complaints and ensuring that action is taken in a timely manner. (within 10 days)
There is a link on the Dost website to this Policy and people are encouraged to get in touch to raise a concern, complaint or give feedback.

When investigating concerns/ complaints, the Director/ Board of Trustees should always try to actively listen to what the complainant has to say, rather than arguing with them or trying to 'pass the buck'.

[NOTE: This section should be read in conjunction with the Concerns, Complaints and Feedback Flowchart in Appendix 4.]

Staff **MUST** inform the Director of **ALL** concerns or complaints from themselves, service users and the public.

[see Appendix 1 for further guidance]

The Director/ Board of Trustees should ensure they take the following steps:

- Record the initial details of the concern/ complaint on the Concerns /Complaints/ Suggestions Register. This Register is held by the Director [see 'Monitoring' section below for further information] and is reviewed annually by the Trustees.
- Meet with the complainant in order to give them a chance to discuss their feelings about the issues prompting their concern/ complaint, to outline how the Dost process works, and explain what they can expect to happen next.
- Establish as many of the 'facts' of the situation as is reasonably possible. This may involve a review of documentary evidence, interviewing staff, requesting reports from staff, as well as interviewing any other relevant parties.
- Meet with the complainant and all other appropriate parties in order to discuss and agree an appropriate action plan based on the above investigation. If necessary, an interpreter will be found to ensure the complainant is able to be understood and can understand the discussion.
- Produce a written report outlining the conclusions of the investigation.
- Notify the complainant in writing of the outcome of the investigation or through the use of an interpreter.
- Record the outcome of the complaint on the Concerns/ Complaints/ Suggestions Register

Investigating a Complaint

If the complaint is about, or in any material way involves, the Director, then the Director must inform the Trustees of this fact. The Trustees will then decide whether it is appropriate for the Director to investigate the complaint and, if not, will decide who will be responsible for investigating the complaint in line with the steps set out above.

Appeals Procedure

Should the complainant remain dissatisfied by the outcome of the complaint, the Director must refer the matter to the Trustees for appeal.

The Trustees must then convene in order to decide whether a formal Appeal Hearing is required.

Safeguarding

If the concern/ complaint relates to a safeguarding issue, the Dost Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies and we will follow our safeguarding procedures, where we may be required to notify Children's Services, the Police or other agencies if required.

Anonymous Complaints

We respect your confidentiality if you wish to raise a concern or make a complaint. It is much easier to deal with a complaint if you give us your contact details so we can follow up with you to understand and resolve the issue as quickly as we can. If you do not give us contact information, this makes the process much harder.

If we receive an anonymous complaint we will still log it and take a view as to the appropriate course of action depending on the seriousness of the concern. However we will not be able to reassure you that action has been taken nor fully investigate. In order for us to improve and serve young people to the best of our ability, if you do make a complaint, please do give us your contact details.

Action against a Staff member/ Volunteer/ Trustee

If a complaint is found to be serious and requires us to take action against any of our team, you can be assured that we will take appropriate steps. We will not be able to tell you the specific action we have taken, nor the details of any investigation, as these are confidential matters between us and our member of staff. Nevertheless you can trust that we will take matters as seriously as required, as we want to prevent any bad practice and find ways to improve our services.

Monitoring

All complaints made by service users will be noted on the Concerns/ Complaints/ Suggestions Register held by the Director which allows Dost to monitor:

- the number and nature of concerns/ complaints received
- how these were dealt with
- any issues raised by these concerns/ complaints
- all actions taken to provide better services
- the effectiveness of the Concerns, Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedures.

Feedback

At Dost, we strive to listen to the young people, staff, volunteers and members of the community/ public and will invite young people to take part in evaluations and also ask staff and volunteers and outside agencies to comment or give feedback on our service and help develop it and ensure it is as positive as it can be for all involved. We will design feedback surveys/ evaluations to be as accessible as possible to the young people.

Appendix 1 - Guidance for Dealing with Concerns/ Complaints

Most people complain because they have a problem, not because they enjoy complaining.

They may have an idea of what their problem is, but it is up to the person investigating the concern to find out exactly:

a) What the complainant perceives as the problem.
b) What the actual problem is (which may be different from the perceived problem).

Most importantly, listen to the person and acknowledge what they are saying.

You may be able to tell what the actual problem is within a few seconds - but remember that the person 'owns' the problem and has a right to be heard.

Remember, something which may seem trivial to you, may feel catastrophic to the complainant.

Firstly, find out the nature of the problem as they see it – at this stage, much of the discussion may be about emotions and there might not be much information about the actual problem.

Secondly, identify the actual problem accurately. This entails listening to the person and asking them relevant questions in order to clarify in what way Dost has failed to meet their expectations or needs (see guidelines below).

When a person comes to you with a complaint:

- Identify yourself, tell the person your name and offer to help. **NEVER** say 'it's not my job'
- **NEVER** get into an argument with the person – instead, acknowledge their concern
- Don't tell them what you can't do, maintain the focus on what you **CAN** do
- Ask for the facts, check that you understand the problem – but take care not to interrupt them or jump to conclusions before they have finished
- Avoid technical/ professional jargon
- Finally, **DO NOT** make promises unless you are sure that you can keep them

Clarify the problem with the following questions:

- Ask the person making the complaint to specify exactly what the problem is
- Identify the background information to the problem
- Find out what the present situation is
- Explore the scale of the problem - do others have the same problem, even though they have not complained?
- Find out what the complainant wants to achieve from reporting this problem
- Check your own contribution to the problem; what role are you playing in it? Are you helping or hindering the situation? (Remember: try not to be defensive.)
- Examine all the pieces - does the person feel that you understand what the problem is?

Once all this information has been gathered, forward the details to the Director (if they have not been involved in the discussion); who will contact the complainant within 7 working days.

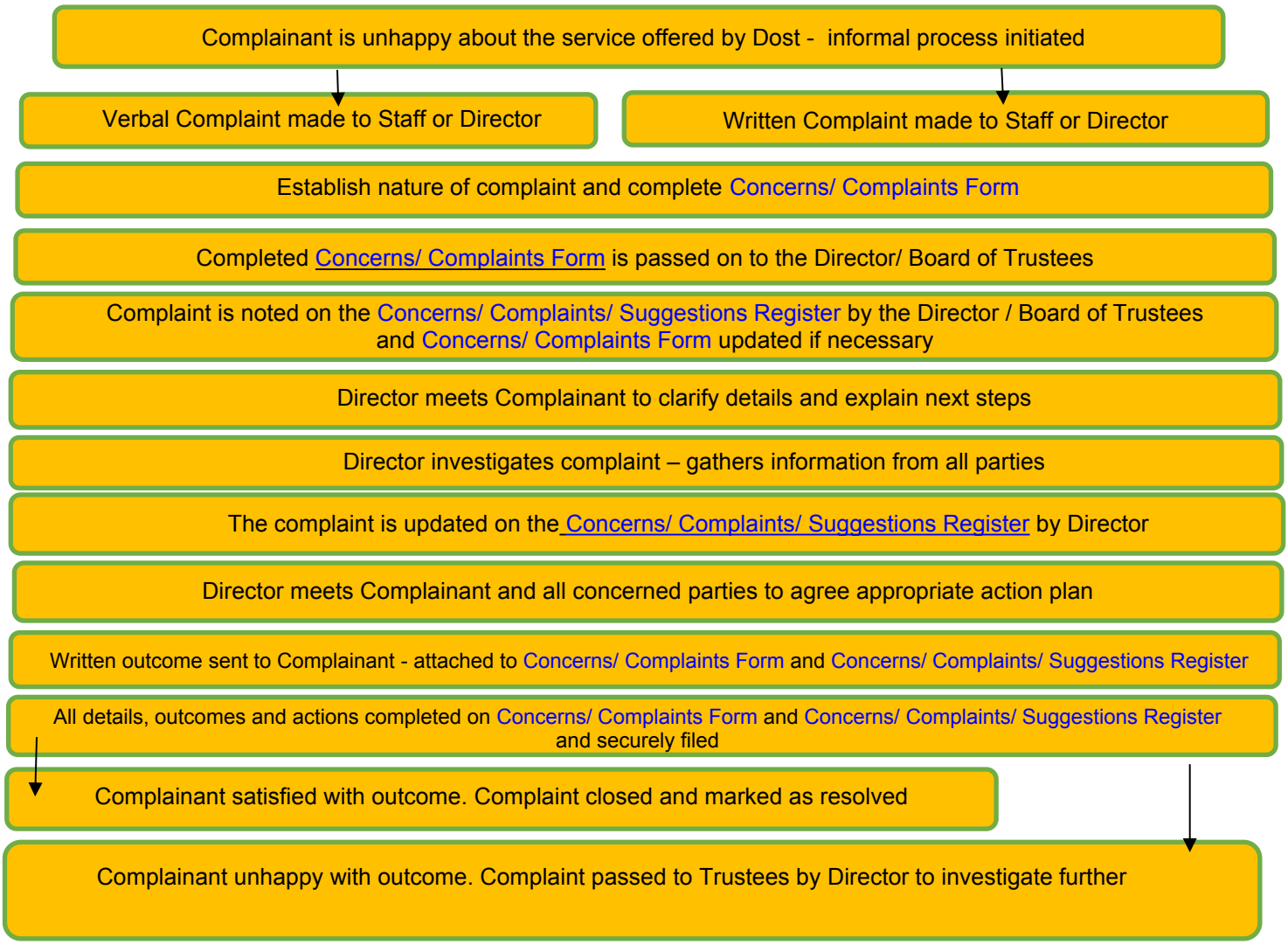
Appendix 2 – Concern/ complaint/ feedback Form

CONCERN, COMPLAINT OR FEEDBACK FORM	
Name of person making concern, complaint, feedback:	
Telephone Number:	
Address/ email address (preferred way to contact you):	
Concern, complaint, feedback details Names, dates, activities, what happened?	
Results of investigation if relevant:	
Action taken and outcome:	
Date complainant contacted with the results of the investigation and action taken/ accepted?	
Name of person investigating concern/ complaint:	
Role of person investigating concern/ complaint:	
Signed and dated by investigating staff:	
Signed and dated by Complainant:	
Signed and dated by Director:	

Appendix 3 – Concerns/ Complaints/ Suggestions Register

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS/ SUGGESTIONS REGISTER					
Date of concern/ complaint/ suggestion	**Received from**	**Received by**	**Action Taken and date** **Changes implemented?**	**Follow up?**	**Outcome Accepted?**

Appendix 4 - Concerns and Complaints Flowchart



CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS, FEEDBACK	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
Reviewed and revised **(Marian Spiers)**	December 2020		July 2022	September 2023	December 2024	
Agreed by Trustees	December 2020 **(Jim Minton)**		September 2022 **(Jim Minton)**	October 2023 **(Jim Minton)**		January 2025 **(Jim Minton)**
	2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**2031**
Reviewed and revised **(Marian Spiers)**	January 2026					
Agreed by Trustees	February 2026 **(Jim Minton)**					