

Connect Church Complaints Policy

We believe that clear, open and fair procedures for handling complaints are necessary for the sake of our congregation and the church organisation and are consistent with our Christian ethos.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Connect Church. Complaints are an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

The aim always, when responding to complaints, is to enable them to be resolved informally, speedily and fairly by discussion, careful listening, mediation and negotiation. It is hoped that the vast majority of issues and problems that arise can be resolved swiftly in this way.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use Connect's Discipline and Grievance policy contained within the staff contract.

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Trustees.

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Adopted on: October 2016

Last reviewed: May 2021

Connect Church

Complaints Procedure

Contact Details for Complaints

Written complaints may be sent to The Senior Pastor (James Roberts) at 91 Whitelands Ave, Chorleywood Herts WD3 5RQ or by e-mail at james@connectchurch.org.uk. Verbal complaints may be made in person to any of Connect's staff, or trustees at any of our events or activities.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other opportunities the complainant may have. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.

The person who receives a complaint either by phone or in person should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Connect
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Resolving Complaints - Stage One - Verbal

If anyone wishes to formally raise a complaint about a member of staff, the church organisation or another church member, they should do so at the earliest opportunity.

The issue should be raised with the Church Administrator, unless the issue is related to that person, in which case they should talk to the Senior Pastor.

Resolving Complaints - Stage Two - Written

If the issue cannot be resolved at the verbal stage, the person can make a formal complaint in writing to, in the first instance, the Senior Pastor.

If the matter has already been discussed with that person, then the complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of Trustees.

Resolving Complaints - Stage Three - Appeal and/or Referral

If the person is not satisfied with the outcome of the written complaint they should inform Chair of Trustees in writing within five working days of receiving a response to their written complaint.

The complaint should then be referred to our umbrella church at St Mary's Bryanston Square, 255 Old Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5QT. The appeal will be reviewed by the Chair of the Trustees and another suitable

person from St Mary's. Following the appeal, the decision will be communicated in writing. That decision is final.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

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

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