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Introduction

Cameron and Cooper Limited is committed to creating homes and learning environments where young people feel safe, respected, and genuinely listened to. Central to this commitment is the belief that every young person has the right to express their views, raise concerns, and make complaints without fear of negative consequences.

Our approach is grounded in the organisation's ethos of Love, Care, and Consistency. Adults working within Cameron and Cooper Limited are expected to build trusting relationships with young people and to respond to concerns with openness, curiosity, and respect. Wherever possible, concerns will be addressed through honest conversation and supportive relationships so that issues can be resolved quickly and positively.

We recognise that raising concerns can sometimes feel difficult for young people, particularly where past experiences may have made it harder to trust adults or feel confident about speaking up. For this reason, the organisation promotes a culture where feedback and complaints are welcomed as an important part of improving the care and support provided to young people.

This policy sets out how concerns and complaints can be raised and explains the process Cameron and Cooper Limited will follow to ensure that complaints are handled fairly, transparently, and in line with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

The policy reflects the requirements of:

- The **Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015**, particularly **Regulation 39 – Complaints and Representations**.
- The **Children's Homes Quality Standards**, including the **Children's Views, Wishes and Feelings Standard** and the **Leadership and Management Standard**, which require that young people are able to raise concerns and that their views are listened to and acted upon.
- The **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, where concerns relate to education provision.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**.

Through this policy, Cameron and Cooper Limited aims to ensure that:

- young people feel confident that their voices matter
- concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly
- complaints are handled fairly and transparently
- learning from complaints contributes to continuous improvement across the organisation

Young people are also reminded that they may raise concerns directly with professionals outside of the organisation, including their Social Worker, Independent Reviewing Officer, Ofsted, or the Children's Commissioner for England if they wish.

Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all concerns and complaints about Cameron and Cooper Limited are managed in a clear, fair, and transparent manner. The organisation recognises that responding well to complaints is an essential part of safeguarding, accountability, and maintaining trusting relationships with young people, families, and professionals.

Cameron and Cooper Limited is guided by the organisational values of Love, Care and Consistency. These values shape how adults respond to concerns, disagreements, and complaints raised by young people or others connected with the service.

Love means recognising the importance of relationships, listening carefully to the voices of young people, and ensuring that concerns are met with empathy and respect.

Care means taking all complaints seriously, ensuring that concerns about safety, wellbeing, or service quality are properly considered and addressed.

Consistency means applying clear procedures, responding within agreed timescales, and ensuring that complaints are handled fairly and without bias.

The organisation adopts a trauma-informed approach to responding to complaints. Many young people who live in residential care may have experienced situations where they have not felt heard or believed. For this reason, adults must remain mindful that expressions of frustration, dissatisfaction, or anger may reflect deeper concerns about safety, trust, or fairness.

Adults should therefore approach complaints with curiosity and openness, seeking to understand the experience of the person raising the concern rather than becoming defensive or dismissive.

Where concerns are raised, Cameron and Cooper Limited will seek to:

- Listen carefully to the person raising the concern and ensure they feel heard.
- Respond promptly and fairly.
- Resolve issues at the earliest appropriate stage wherever possible.
- Ensure young people are supported to express their views and have access to independent advocacy if required.
- Maintain clear and accurate records of complaints and outcomes.
- Use learning from complaints to strengthen practice and improve services.

The organisation recognises that many concerns can be resolved informally through open discussion. However, where concerns cannot be resolved quickly or where a formal complaint is made, the procedures outlined in this policy will be followed to ensure the matter is addressed appropriately.

Complaints will never result in a young person being treated negatively or differently. Young people must feel confident that raising concerns will not affect the care, support, or relationships they receive within the home or school.

What is a Complaint?

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that concerns and complaints may arise from time to time. These provide an important opportunity for reflection, learning, and improvement.

A concern is usually an issue that can be resolved quickly through discussion. For example, a young person may raise a worry about a decision, a misunderstanding, or something that has happened during the day. In many cases, concerns can be addressed informally through conversation with a trusted adult, key adult, teacher, or manager.

A complaint is a more formal expression of dissatisfaction about the actions, decisions, or conduct of Cameron and Cooper Limited, or about the quality of care, support, or services provided.

A complaint may relate to:

- An unwelcome or disputed decision.
- The quality or appropriateness of care, support, or services provided.
- Delays in decision making or service delivery.
- The behaviour or attitude of adults working within the organisation.
- The way a previous concern has been managed or resolved.

Where possible, Cameron and Cooper Limited will seek to resolve issues quickly and informally. However, where a concern cannot be resolved through discussion, or where the individual raising the issue wishes to make a formal complaint, the procedures outlined in this policy will be followed.

Young people, families, and professionals also have the right to raise complaints directly with external bodies if they wish. This may include:

- The young person's placing authority.
- The young person's social worker or Independent Reviewing Officer.
- Ofsted.
- The Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service.
- Independent advocacy services.

Young people will always be supported to access independent advice or advocacy if they wish to make a complaint.

Raising a complaint will never result in a young person being treated differently or negatively. Cameron and Cooper Limited is committed to ensuring that concerns and complaints can be raised safely and without fear of repercussions.

Who Can Make a Complaint

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that anyone affected by the services provided by the organisation has the right to raise a concern or make a complaint.

Complaints may be made by:

- Young people currently living in one of the organisation's residential homes.
- Young people who have previously lived in one of the homes.
- Young people attending the organisation's school provision.
- Parents, carers, or family members.
- Representatives acting on behalf of a young person, including advocates.
- Social workers or other professionals involved in a young person's care or education.
- Placing authorities or commissioning bodies.

- Members of the public, including neighbours or individuals living within the local community.

Young people may make a complaint themselves or ask another person to do so on their behalf. This may include a trusted adult, a family member, a social worker, or an independent advocate.

Where a young person wishes to raise a complaint, adults must ensure that they are supported to do so in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding, and communication needs. Young people must be reminded that they have the right to access independent advocacy if they wish to make a complaint or seek advice about raising concerns.

Where complaints are made on behalf of a young person, Cameron and Cooper Limited will take reasonable steps to ensure that the young person's views, wishes, and feelings are understood and taken into account.

All complainants will be treated respectfully and will be kept informed about the progress and outcome of their complaint wherever appropriate.

Informing Young People about the Complaints Procedure

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that young people must clearly understand their right to raise concerns or make a complaint about their care, experiences, or the decisions that affect them.

Young people living within the organisation's homes or attending the school must be supported to understand how to express dissatisfaction, who they can speak to, and how concerns will be addressed.

Information about the complaints procedure is shared with young people in ways that are appropriate to their age, level of understanding, and communication needs.

As part of the introduction to the home, each young person will receive information about the complaint's procedure through the Young Person's Guide. This information explains how concerns can be raised, who young people can speak to, and what will happen if they choose to make a complaint.

Each young person's key adult is responsible for ensuring that the complaints procedure is explained and discussed with the young person during the early stages of their placement. These conversations should take place in a supportive and relaxed way that allows the young person to ask questions and understand their rights.

The complaints procedure should also be revisited during key adult sessions, ensuring that young people continue to understand how to raise concerns and feel confident that they will be listened to.

Cameron and Cooper Limited also provides a young person friendly version of the Complaints Policy, which explains the process in clear and accessible language. This document outlines:

- how young people can raise concerns
- who they can talk to if they feel unhappy or worried
- how their complaint will be responded to
- who they can contact outside the home for support

Adults should ensure that young people are aware of this document and understand how to use it if they wish to make a complaint.

Young people must also be informed of their right to seek support from an independent advocate when raising a complaint. Advocates can support young people to express their views, represent their interests, and help them understand the complaints process.

Adults should remain mindful that some young people may find it difficult to raise concerns directly. Young people may express dissatisfaction through behaviour, frustration, or withdrawal rather than through formal complaints. Adults must remain attentive to these signs and provide opportunities for young people to share their experiences safely.

The Registered Manager holds overall responsibility for ensuring that young people are appropriately informed about the complaint's procedure and that information about advocacy and external complaints routes is available within the home.

The Responsible Individual/Head of Safeguarding provides organisational oversight by monitoring records and governance systems across Cameron and Cooper Limited to ensure that the complaints procedure is being implemented consistently and that young people's rights to raise concerns are supported.

Where a young person wishes to make a complaint, adults must ensure they are supported to do so and that the concern is responded to appropriately in accordance with the procedures set out within this policy.

Receiving Complaints

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that concerns or complaints may be raised in a variety of ways and by a range of individuals connected to the service. Young people, families, professionals, and members of the public should feel confident that concerns will be listened to and taken seriously.

Complaints may be made:

- In person.
- In writing.
- By email or text message.
- Through an advocate or representative.
- Through a professional involved in the young person's care or education.

Young people may raise concerns with any trusted adult within the home or school. This may include their key adult, another adult working in the home, a senior on shift, the Registered Manager, or another senior leader within the organisation.

Where a young person indicates that they wish to make a complaint, or expresses dissatisfaction that may constitute a complaint, the adult receiving the concern must ensure that the young person feels listened to and supported. Adults should remain calm, respectful, and curious about the young person's experience and avoid becoming defensive or dismissive.

Complaints may relate to current or past events. Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that individuals may sometimes raise concerns sometime after an event has occurred. This may

particularly be the case for young people who may need time to feel confident or safe enough to speak about their experiences.

For this reason, complaints will not be dismissed solely because they relate to historic matters. Where concerns are raised about past events, Cameron and Cooper Limited will consider the complaint carefully and determine whether it is possible to review or investigate the matter fairly.

Where a complaint is received, the adult receiving the complaint must ensure that:

- The concern is recorded promptly.
- The Registered Manager is informed.
- The young person is offered appropriate support, including access to independent advocacy where required.

Complaints will normally be acknowledged within two working days, and the complainant will be informed of how the complaint will be managed and the expected timescale for response.

Recording Complaints

Cameron and Cooper Limited maintains clear records of all complaints through the organisation's recording systems.

Where a complaint relates to the care or experiences of an individual young person, the complaint will be recorded within the complaints section of that young person's record.

This includes complaints raised by:

- the young person
- parents or family members
- advocates
- social workers or other professionals

Where a complaint relates to the operation of the home more generally, including concerns raised by neighbours, professionals, or members of the public, the complaint will be recorded within the complaints section held for the home.

Complaints may be recorded by the adult receiving the concern, a senior on shift, the Registered Manager, or another senior leader where appropriate. Regardless of who receives the complaint, the Registered Manager must be informed so that the complaint can be monitored and progressed appropriately.

Where a young person is supported by another individual to raise their complaint, this support should also be recorded.

Where a complaint raises safeguarding concerns, the matter must also be managed in line with the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

The majority of concerns and complaints can often be resolved quickly through open discussion and clarification. Cameron and Cooper Limited encourages early resolution wherever appropriate, provided that the person raising the concern is satisfied with the outcome.

Where a formal complaint is made, or where a concern cannot be resolved informally, the matter will be addressed through **Stage 1 – Local Resolution**.

At this stage, the Registered Manager will take responsibility for reviewing the complaint and seeking to resolve the matter promptly and fairly. The Registered Manager may speak with the complainant, the young person, and any adults involved in order to understand the concern fully and determine an appropriate response.

Where the complaint relates to the experiences of a young person, the young person should be given the opportunity to share their views, wishes, and feelings. Young people should also be reminded that they may seek support from an independent advocate if they wish.

The aim of Stage 1 is to:

- understand the concern being raised
- clarify any misunderstandings
- consider whether practice needs to change or improve
- agree a resolution that is acceptable to the person raising the complaint where possible

Where appropriate, the Registered Manager may seek to resolve the complaint through discussion, explanation, or agreed actions.

Complaints at Stage 1 should normally be responded to within 10 working days of the complaint being received. Where the matter is more complex or requires additional enquiries, this timescale may be extended by a further 10 working days. Where this occurs, the complainant will be informed and kept updated about the progress of the complaint.

The outcome of the complaint will be shared with the complainant and recorded within the organisation's recording systems.

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they must be informed of their right to request that the complaint progresses to **Stage 2 – Formal Investigation**.

Adults supporting a young person must ensure that the young person understands this option and is supported to progress the complaint if they wish to do so.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

Where a complaint cannot be resolved through Stage 1 – Local Resolution, or where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, the complaint may progress to **Stage 2 – Formal Investigation**.

Stage 2 provides a more detailed and independent review of the concerns raised. The purpose of this stage is to ensure that the complaint has been considered thoroughly, that the circumstances surrounding the complaint have been examined carefully, and that any learning or improvements required are identified.

A complaint may progress to Stage 2 where:

- The complainant requests escalation following the outcome of Stage 1.
- The concerns raised are sufficiently serious that a more formal investigation is required.
- The matter cannot reasonably be resolved through local discussion.

Where a complaint progresses to Stage 2, the process will be overseen by the Head of Safeguarding / Responsible Individual.

The Head of Safeguarding / Responsible Individual will appoint an Investigating Officer who has not been directly involved in the matter being complained about. This ensures that the investigation is conducted fairly and independently.

The Investigating Officer will review the complaint and gather relevant information. This may include:

- speaking with the complainant
- speaking with the young person where appropriate
- speaking with adults involved in the matter
- reviewing relevant records and documentation

Where the complaint relates to the experiences of a young person, the young person must be given the opportunity to share their views, wishes, and feelings as part of the investigation. Young people should also be reminded of their right to access support from an independent advocate if they wish.

The purpose of the investigation is to establish the facts of the matter, consider whether practice has met expected standards, and determine whether any actions are required to address the concerns raised.

Complaints at Stage 2 should normally be investigated and responded to within 25 working days. Where the investigation is complex and requires additional time, the complainant will be informed of the reasons for any delay and kept updated on progress.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the complainant will be informed of the outcome. Wherever possible this should be explained clearly and respectfully, and the outcome will also be confirmed in writing.

Where the investigation identifies that improvements to practice are required, Cameron and Cooper Limited will take appropriate action. This may include changes to procedures, additional training for adults, or other service improvements.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may request a **Stage 3 review by the Director**, who has not been involved in the earlier stages of the complaints process.

Stage 3 – Review by the Director

Where the complainant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation, they may request a **Stage 3 review** of the complaint.

Stage 3 provides the opportunity for the complaint and the actions taken during the earlier stages of the process to be reviewed by a senior leader who has not previously been involved in the matter.

Requests for a Stage 3 review should normally be made in writing within 20 working days of the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation being shared with the complainant.

The review will be carried out by the organisation's **Director**, who holds senior oversight responsibility for the service and has not been involved in the earlier stages of the complaints process.

As part of the review, the Director will consider:

- the original complaint
- the actions taken during Stage 1
- the findings of the Stage 2 investigation
- any additional information provided by the complainant

Where appropriate, the Director may also speak with the complainant or request further clarification in order to fully understand the concerns raised.

The purpose of the Stage 3 review is to ensure that the complaint has been handled fairly, that the investigation was conducted appropriately, and that the conclusions reached were reasonable based on the available information.

Following the review, the Director will determine whether:

- the complaint has been appropriately addressed
- further action is required
- any additional learning or improvement is needed within the organisation

The outcome of the review will be communicated to the complainant and confirmed in writing.

Following the Stage 3 review, the complaint will be considered concluded within Cameron and Cooper Limited's internal complaints procedure.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may choose to raise their concerns with external bodies such as:

- the young person's placing authority
- Ofsted
- the Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service

Young people should be supported to access these routes if they wish to do so.

Complaints Concerning Education Provision

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that concerns or complaints may arise in relation to the education provision provided within the organisation's school.

Complaints relating to the school will be managed in accordance with this policy while also reflecting the requirements of the **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education**.

Where a concern or complaint relates specifically to the school, the matter will normally be addressed by the **Assistant Head**, who holds responsibility for oversight of the school's day to day operation.

Where a young person raises a concern about their experiences in school, they should be encouraged to speak with a trusted adult. This may include a teacher, a member of the school team, or their key adult within the home. The concern should then be shared with the Assistant Head, who will review the matter and seek to resolve it appropriately.

The Assistant Head may speak with the young person, relevant adults within the school, and where necessary adults within the home in order to understand the concern and determine an appropriate response.

Where the concern relates to the experiences of a young person living in the home, the Registered Manager should be informed so that there is clear communication between the education and care teams and so that the young person's views and wellbeing can be appropriately supported.

Where concerns raised within the school relate to safeguarding or welfare issues, these must be managed in line with the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

All complaints relating to education provision must be recorded within the organisation's recording systems and reviewed as part of the school's governance and safeguarding oversight processes.

Where a complaint about the school cannot be resolved locally, the matter may progress through the organisation's complaints procedure in line with the stages outlined within this policy.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

At any stage of the complaints process, a complainant may decide that they no longer wish to pursue their complaint.

Where a complainant indicates that they wish to withdraw a complaint, Cameron and Cooper Limited will respect this decision. The complainant may be asked to confirm the withdrawal in writing where possible, so that there is a clear record that the complaint has been withdrawn.

The withdrawal of a complaint will be recorded within the organisation's recording systems.

Where the complaint relates to the experiences of a young person, adults must remain mindful that a young person may sometimes withdraw a complaint due to worry, pressure, or uncertainty. In such circumstances, adults should ensure that the young person feels safe and supported and understands that they can raise concerns again if they wish.

Where a complaint raises safeguarding concerns, Cameron and Cooper Limited may still need to review or address the matter even if the complaint itself is withdrawn, in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Cameron and Cooper Limited is committed to managing complaints in a way that respects the privacy and dignity of all individuals involved while ensuring that concerns are properly considered.

Information relating to complaints will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to review or investigate the matter appropriately. This may include relevant adults within the home or school, senior leaders within the organisation, or external professionals where necessary.

All complaints are recorded securely within the organisation's Clearcare recording system.

Where a complaint relates to the care or experiences of a specific young person, the complaint will be recorded within the complaints section of that young person's record. Complaints relating to the operation of the home more generally are recorded within the complaints section held for the home.

Records of complaints must be clear, accurate, and respectful. Care should be taken to ensure that information recorded is factual and proportionate.

Where appropriate, information relating to complaints may be shared with relevant professionals, including placing authorities, social workers, or regulators, where this is necessary for safeguarding or oversight purposes.

The management of complaints and associated information will be carried out in accordance with the **Data Protection Act 2018**, the **UK General Data Protection Regulation**, and relevant safeguarding guidance.

Access to Advocacy and External Support

Cameron and Cooper Limited recognises that young people may sometimes feel more comfortable speaking to someone outside of the organisation when raising concerns or making a complaint. Young people must therefore have access to independent advice, advocacy, and external support.

Young people will be informed of their right to seek independent support and advice when raising concerns or making complaints. Information about advocacy services and external support organisations is provided within the Young Person's Guide and is explained to young people during their time living in the home.

An advocate is an independent person whose role is to help young people express their views, wishes, and feelings. Advocates can:

- help a young person understand their rights
- support them to raise concerns or make a complaint
- attend meetings with them
- speak on their behalf where appropriate

Adults must ensure that young people understand that they can request the support of an advocate at any stage of the complaints process.

Where a young person chooses not to access advocacy support, this decision should be respected. However, adults must remain mindful that young people's views may change over time. For this reason, opportunities to access advocacy should be revisited periodically and whenever a young person raises concerns or experiences difficulties.

Young people should also be reminded that they can speak directly with professionals involved in their care, including their Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer, if they wish to raise concerns.

Young people also have the right to contact external organisations if they wish to make a complaint or seek advice. This includes:

Ofsted
Ofsted regulates children's homes and ensures that young people are treated safely and fairly.

Address: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner for England – Help at Hand Service
The Children's Commissioner promotes and protects the rights of children and young people and can provide advice and support where young people feel they are not being listened to.

Address: Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT
Telephone: 0800 528 0731
Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

These contact details are also provided within the Young Person's Guide, ensuring that young people have easy access to independent support whenever they need it.

Adults must ensure that young people are supported to access these services where requested.

Monitoring, Governance and Service Learning

Cameron and Cooper Limited is committed to learning from concerns and complaints in order to continually improve the quality of care and support provided to young people.

The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that complaints raised within the home are responded to appropriately, recorded accurately within the organisation's recording systems, and resolved in a timely and fair manner.

Complaints records are reviewed as part of the home's ongoing monitoring and quality assurance processes in line with the expectations set out within Regulation 39 of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015.

This review supports the Registered Manager in identifying patterns, emerging concerns, and opportunities to strengthen practice within the home.

Complaints are also considered through the home's Regulation 45 Quality of Care Review, where themes, trends, and learning from complaints are analysed to inform service development and improvements to practice.

The Head of Safeguarding / Responsible Individual maintains organisational oversight of complaints across Cameron and Cooper Limited. This includes reviewing complaint records

and identifying any themes, patterns, or emerging risks that may require changes to practice, additional training, or wider service improvements.

Where appropriate, concerns or complaints may also be referenced within the organisation's weekly risk register discussions, allowing the senior leadership team to maintain oversight of significant issues and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Complaints are subject to independent scrutiny through the Regulation 44 monitoring process. As part of their monthly visits, the independent person may review complaints records, speak with young people about their experiences of raising concerns, and consider whether complaints have been managed appropriately and fairly.

This independent oversight provides an additional safeguard that young people's concerns are being listened to and addressed effectively.

The organisation's Director retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the complaints process is implemented appropriately and that Cameron and Cooper Limited continues to meet its regulatory responsibilities.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where necessary, in response to:

- changes to legislation or statutory guidance
- learning from complaints or safeguarding concerns
- feedback from young people, families, or professionals
- findings from internal audits, Regulation 44 visits, or regulatory inspections

Adults working within Cameron and Cooper Limited will receive appropriate guidance and support to ensure that the complaints procedure is understood and consistently applied.