

Hazelwood Complaints Procedure



Who Can Make a Complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children registered at the provision. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to Hazelwood ARC Limited about any provision of facilities or services that we provide.

Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

The Difference Between a Concern and a Complaint

- **A concern** is an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered important for which reassurances are sought.
- **A complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure.

Hazelwood ARC Limited takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter quickly.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In such cases, **Sophie Scott** or **Lesley-Anne Repper** will refer you to another member of staff. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is most important.

However, we understand that there are occasions when people prefer to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Hazelwood ARC Limited will attempt to resolve the issue internally through the stages outlined within this complaint's procedure.

How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint

A concern or complaint can be made **in person**, **in writing**, or **by telephone**. Complaints may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, provided they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with **Sophie Scott (Proprietor)** or **Lesley-Anne Repper (Deputy)**. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

- **Complaints against staff** should be made in the first instance to **Sophie Scott (Proprietor)**.
 - Written complaints should be marked *Private and Confidential* and sent to:
The Old Cartshed, Rookhaye Estate, Bowerchalke, Salisbury, SP5 5BT

- **Complaints about the Provision Owner** should be addressed to **Lesley-Anne Repper (Deputy)** at the same address, also marked *Private and Confidential*.

For ease of use, a **template complaint form** is included at the end of this procedure. If you need help completing it, you can seek assistance from third-party organisations such as **Citizens Advice**.

In accordance with **equality law**, reasonable adjustments will be considered to enable complainants to access and complete this procedure (e.g., providing information in alternative formats, assistance in raising a complaint, or holding meetings in accessible locations).

Anonymous Complaints

Hazelwood ARC Limited will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, **Sophie Scott** and/or **Lesley-Anne Repper** will determine whether the complaint warrants investigation.

Timescales

Complaints must be raised **within three months** of the incident, or within three months of the last in a series of related incidents.

Complaints outside this timeframe may be considered only in **exceptional circumstances**.

If other bodies (e.g., police, local authority safeguarding teams, or tribunals) are investigating aspects of the complaint, this may affect our timescales or result in suspension of the procedure until those investigations are completed.

If legal action is commenced, Hazelwood ARC Limited may suspend the complaints procedure until legal proceedings have concluded.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage of the procedure, Hazelwood ARC Limited aims to resolve complaints constructively. Where appropriate, we may:

- Provide an explanation.
- Acknowledge that the situation could have been handled better.
- Offer assurances that steps will be taken to prevent recurrence.
- Explain any changes that will be made and provide timescales.
- Undertake a review of relevant policies.
- Offer an apology.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, this must be confirmed **in writing**.

Stage 1: Formal Complaint

Formal complaints must be made to the **Proprietor** or **Deputy**, either in person, in writing (preferably using the complaint form), or by telephone.

The complaint will be acknowledged **within 30 days** of receipt, and the date recorded.

The response will:

- Clarify the nature of the complaint.
- Confirm what remains unresolved.
- Identify the outcome sought.
- Offer, if appropriate, a face-to-face meeting

Note: The Proprietor may delegate the investigation to the Deputy, but **not** the decision-making.

During the investigation, the Proprietor or Deputy will:

- Interview those involved (allowing accompaniment if requested)
- Keep written records of all meetings/interviews.

A **formal written response** will be provided within **30 days** of receipt of the complaint. If more time is needed, an update and revised date will be shared.

The response will include:

- Actions taken during the investigation.
- A full explanation of the decision and reasoning
- Any actions Hazelwood ARC Limited will take to resolve the complaint.

If dissatisfied, the complainant will be informed of **how to escalate the complaint**.

If the complaint is about the Proprietor, the **Deputy** will complete all Stage 1 actions.

Next Steps

If the complainant believes that the complaint was not handled in accordance with this procedure, or that Hazelwood ARC Limited acted unlawfully or unreasonably under education law, they may contact:

Wiltshire County Council (after completion of Stage 1).

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to Sophie Scott or Lesley-Anne Repper, who will acknowledge receipt and explain the next steps.

Your Name:

Student's Name (if relevant):

Your Relationship to the Student:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime Telephone:

Evening Telephone:

Details of Complaint (include whether discussed with anyone):

Actions You Feel Might Resolve the Problem:

Supporting Documents (if any):

Signature:

Date:

Official Use Only

Date Acknowledgement Sent:

By Whom:

Complaint Referred To:

Date:

Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

Complainants will receive a more effective response if they:

- Explain the complaint in full as early as possible.
- Co-operate with Hazelwood ARC in seeking a resolution.
- Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings.
- Ask for assistance when needed.
- Treat all those involved with respect.
- Refrain from publicising details of the complaint on social media and maintain confidentiality.

Investigator (Proprietor or Deputy)

The investigator's role is to establish facts relevant to the complaint by:

- Providing a comprehensive, fair, and transparent review
- Conducting sensitive interviews with all relevant parties
- Reviewing records and information
- Analysing findings objectively

They should:

- Conduct interviews with an open mind.
- Keep accurate notes or arrange for an independent minute-taker.
- Secure all documents pending appeal.
- Adhere to response timescales.
- Prepare a detailed report summarising findings and recommended actions.

The **Proprietor or Deputy** will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate this decision to the complainant, including escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator

(Sophie Scott – Proprietor / Lesley-Anne Repper – Deputy)

The Complaints Co-ordinator will:

- Keep the complainant updated at each stage.
- Liaise with staff and (if appropriate) the Local Authority
- Ensure confidentiality and compliance with data protection.
- Provide additional support where required (e.g., interpreters, child-friendly communication)
- Keep comprehensive records.
- Ensure all meetings are minuted and free from conflicts of interest.

