



The local voice of learning disability

Complaints Policy

Reading Mencap

Date: Sept 2025

Review: Sept 2027

Tel: 0118 966 2518

Email: office@readingmencap.org.uk

www.readingmencap.org.uk

Registered Charity: 1118287, Company Number: 05976118

Office Use Only (annotate on WORD copy of policy only)	Tick	Date: dd/mm/yy
Policy authorised & uploaded to PDF File		
Policy schedule updated		
Old version policy deleted on both files		
Uploaded to Word File		

Introduction

This policy is intended for use by anyone who has interaction with Reading Mencap as a service user, parent, carer, member of the public or partner organisation.

Unless the concern is relating to fundraising practices, Reading Mencap volunteers should refer to the Volunteers Problem Solving Procedure and related Volunteer Policy, while Reading Mencap staff should refer to the relevant internal policies.

Everyone has a right to express their views or complain about a service provided by Reading Mencap or any other issue. By inviting comments and encouraging feedback, Reading Mencap aims to ensure that the way it provides its services and conducts its fundraising is continually reviewed to meet its responsibilities to its service users, partners and the public.

Your continued goodwill is greatly valued by us and we would expect to resolve any day-to-day difficulties or complaints informally and as quickly as possible. In the first instance we would expect you to raise any complaint directly with the member of staff or other person concerned.

The more formal procedure outlined below is intended for use where informal communication has not resolved the problem.

Fundraising Complaints

For service users, members of the public and any other individuals (including Reading Mencap staff and volunteers) and organisations, such as donors and event participants, who would like to share their views on our fundraising activities. As a guide, we will treat the following issues as complaints relating to Reading Mencap's fundraising. Please note this is not an exhaustive list:

- Inappropriate/improper fundraising methods.
- Professional incompetence/misconduct.
- Criminality or non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Procedure

Stage 1 - Informal

It is hoped that any problems or complaints that a service user, parent, carer, member of the public or other person interacting with Reading Mencap may have, can be dealt with informally at source. We will seek to resolve the issue and meet any reasonable expectations the individual may have, ideally to his or her satisfaction.

Stage 2 – In Writing

If a problem cannot be resolved in this way, the complainant should contact Reading Mencap's Chief Executive Officer. Complaining can sometimes be an uncomfortable experience, so we endeavour to provide the following measures to ease the experience for complainants:

- Treat the complaint as confidential and limit who can see the complainant's personal data as it relates to the complaint.
- Respond to the complaint as quickly as possible.
- Provide a named contact.
- Complaints will be investigated fairly and thoroughly.
- Anyone raising a complaint will be treated with respect and the experience of the complainant will be acknowledged, whatever the outcome of the investigation.

The individual wishing to make a complaint should contact the Chief Executive Officer in person, in writing, or by telephone using the following contact details:

The Chief Executive Officer, Reading Mencap, 21 Alexandra Road, Reading, RG1 5PE
Email: Please email office@readingmencap.org.uk to request an up-to-date email address for the CEO. Tel: 0118 9662518 and ask to speak to the CEO.

If the complainant is unable to make a written complaint or has any access needs, they should discuss this with the CEO.

Advocates and representatives

We understand that some people may wish to make a complaint through an advocate or a nominated representative. If this is the case, we will request consent from the complainant to share information/outcomes. We will typically request written or verbal consent; however reasonable adjustments can be made to obtain consent through a process that meets the complainant's individual needs.

To help resolve the complaint as quickly and effectively as possible, the individual making the complaint should include the following details:

- Their name, organisation (if relevant), address, telephone number and email. If the complainant does not wish to be contacted in a particular way, please let us know and we will of course respect this.
- As much information about the issue as possible, such as what happened, where, when (date/time), who was present and any action taken, and by whom.
- What it is the complainant felt to be unsatisfactory.
- What the complainant believes should be done to address their concern.

The Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge, in writing, within five working days, the receipt of any complaint.

If the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees (marked '*confidential*') and emailed to trustee-zoe@readingmencap.org.uk.

The Chief Executive (or Chair) will investigate the circumstances leading to the complaint. Any members of Reading Mencap staff to whom the complaint is directed will have an opportunity to respond to the allegations made. Where clarification or further information is felt to be necessary, the Chief Executive (or Chair) will contact the person complaining to request this. A response will be sent within 14 working days. If this is not possible, a holding reply will be sent after 14 days advising when we estimate the investigation will be completed. The complaint response will explain our findings and what action we will be taking/have taken, subject to the constraints of the Data Protection Act.

Consideration will also be given to whether any changes should be made to policies, procedures and training to see if anything might reasonably be done to prevent a similar issue arising in future, and to improve the experience of Reading Mencap's service users, donors and partner organisations.

Stage 3 - Appeal

If the matter has not been resolved, or if there is no satisfactory outcome within 28 working days of the date the complaint was received, the complainant will have the right – if dissatisfied with the results of the enquiry – to put their case, in writing, to an appeal panel of three Reading Mencap Trustee Board members, which will include at least one Honorary Officer. The appeal must be lodged within 20 working days from the date of the original findings of the complaint's procedure. The appeal will be dealt with within 20 working days of receipt of the wish to appeal by the complainant. The appeal should be addressed to:

The Chair of Trustees, Reading Mencap, 21 Alexandra Road, Reading, RG1 5PE or by email to trustee-zoe@readingmencap.org.uk and should be marked 'Complaints Appeal, Confidential'.

If the Chair of Trustees has already been involved in the complaint's procedure at stage 2, another nominated Trustee will lead the Appeal Panel.

The Chair of Trustees will convene the quorum Appeal Panel of Trustees meeting and discuss the matter confidentially and convey the result to the complainant in writing.

If the appeal is found to be justified, the appeal panel will agree any necessary further action with the complainant. The decision of the appeal panel is final, and no further appeal is possible within the organisation.

The Chief Executive Officer (or Chair of Trustees) will keep the Trustee Board and Senior Management Team informed of the number and nature of complaints, and the outcomes, including whether they have resulted in changes to services, policies or procedures. S/he will report to the Board on this at least annually.

External Bodies

If the complainant still feels that the complaint hasn't been appropriately dealt with, they may report it to the following agencies where relevant:

- 1. Fundraising Regulator** – if the matter relates to complaints about the way you have been asked for donations or the way in which fundraisers have behaved.
Telephone 0300 9993407, Website, www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints
- 2. Charity Commission** – if this is a serious concern about the charity, for example:
 - The Charity is not carrying out the service it claims to;
 - The Charity is losing a lot of money;
 - The Charity or its staff/volunteers are harming people;
 - The Charity is being used for personal profit or gain;
 - The Charity is involved in illegal activity;

(in these cases, please refer to the Charity's Whistleblowing Procedure, first to ensure that you have adequately raised these concerns within the organisation first)

Tel: 0300 0669197 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm)

Website: <https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/raising-concerns/>

Signed:



Zoe Ridout, Chair of Trustees

Date: 03.10.2025

Signed:



Amanda Limm, Interim CEO

Date: 1.10.2025

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Source: Royal Mencap, Owner: Chair of Trustees

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