

## Complaints Policy and Procedures

**Horsham** Child Contact Centre aims to provide families and referrers with the best possible service. We value openness and honesty and your opinions, comments and suggestions are always very welcome. Sometimes, however, we may get things wrong and you have a right to make a complaint. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn and to improve our services, as well as a chance to put things right for the person who has made the complaint.

If you have a complaint about our centre, we would like to sort it out as soon as possible. Many complaints can be resolved informally. If you feel able, speak to a member of staff who is working with you, or ask to speak to the **Manager/Team leader** on duty on the day. If you prefer, you can make an appointment with the **Service Manager** and they will try to sort the matter out.

If you are not satisfied or do not wish to seek an informal solution, you may make a formal complaint. There are three stages to the **Horsham** Child Contact Centre's complaints procedure:

### Stage 1

Your complaint should be put in writing and sent to **the Service Manager**. There is a complaints form available which you may find useful to use, or you may write a letter or send an email to [email address]. It is helpful if you clearly state what you are unhappy about, and give details about what has happened, why something has caused you concern and, if applicable, what you would like to happen to put things right.

The **the Manager** will acknowledge your complaint within **5 working days** and will tell you who is dealing with it and when you can expect a reply. They will delegate an appropriate person to look into the complaint and to take appropriate action – this will usually be the **Service Manager**. If your complaint is about the **Manager** you should send your complaint to the **Chair of the Management Committee** (see stage 2 below), marking it 'Private and Confidential'.

Your complaint will be investigated by the designated person, and, if it relates to a specific person or persons, they will be informed and given an opportunity to respond. If appropriate, the person investigating may clarify or seek additional information from you, or may speak to any witnesses to events. If possible, you will receive a reply to your complaint within [fifteen working days/one month]; this should describe the nature of your complaint, action taken to investigate it, the conclusions from the investigation and any action taken as a result of your complaint. It will also explain what you should do if you are not happy with the decision and how to progress your complaint to stage 2.

## Stage 2

If you feel your problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, you should notify the **Chair of the Management Committee** that you wish to take it further. This should be done within 14 days of receiving the response from stage 1.

The **Chair of the Management Committee** will acknowledge your complaint within a week and will tell you when you can expect a reply. This should be within **4 weeks**. If this is not possible for any reason, a progress report should be sent to you with a new date when the investigation should be completed.

The **Chair of the Management Committee** may investigate the facts of the complaint themselves, or may designate a senior person to do so. They may review all the paperwork of the complaint or may speak to the person who looked into the complaint at stage 1. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and be given a further opportunity to respond.

The reply you receive will inform you of the action taken to investigate the complaint, whether it has been upheld or not, and any conclusions or action taken as a result of the complaint. You will also be informed how to progress to the next stage if you do not feel the problem has been satisfactorily resolved.

## Stage 3

If you are not happy with the outcome of stage 2, you must inform the **Chair of the Management Committee** within 14 days of receiving the response.

A panel of 3 **Committee members** will be convened, not including the person who investigated at Stage 2. You will be invited to attend a meeting with them to discuss your complaint. The panel will consider all previous information and may wish to speak to staff/volunteers involved. A written decision will be sent to you within one month. The decision taken at this stage is final.

## Variations to the complaints procedure

The **Management Committee** may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest or to ensure an independent investigation, for example.

## Monitoring and learning

Complaints will be recorded and reported to the next meeting of the **Management Committee**. Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends or need for further action to improve the service.

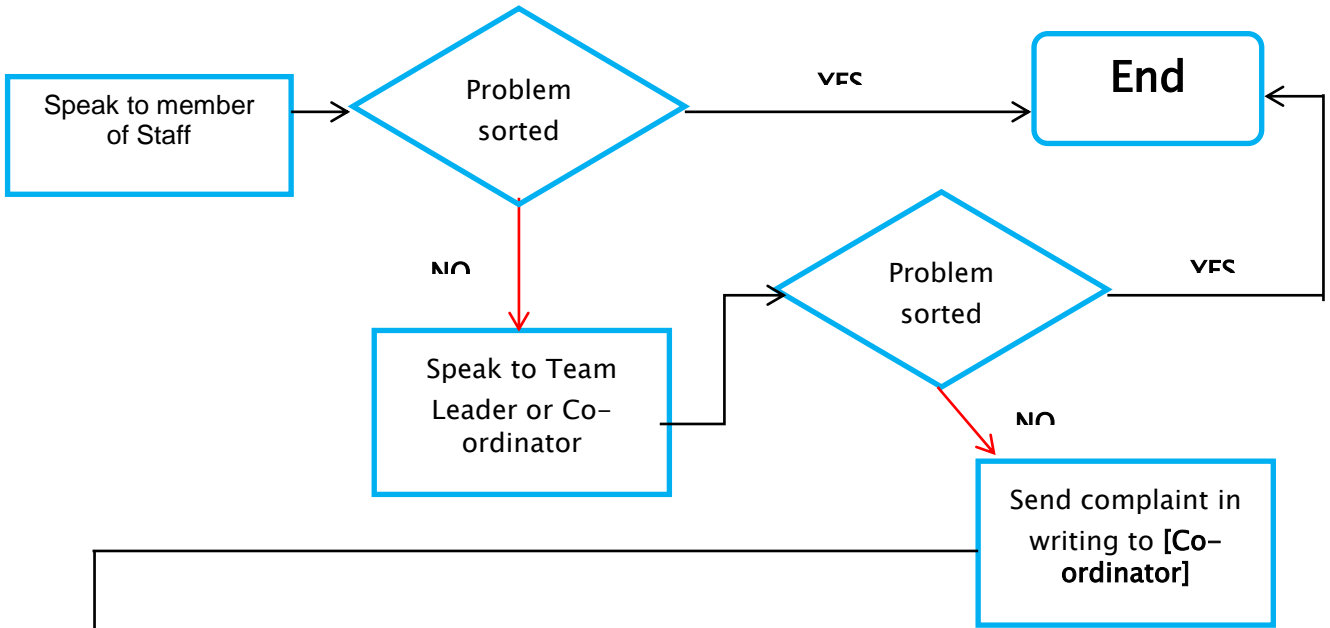
Written records of all complaints, including any written legal or insurance responses, will be held by the Chair of **the Management Committee** in a confidential file.

**Horsham Contact Centre** is an accredited member of the National Association of Child Contact Centres. If after this procedure has been carried out you are still not happy with the response, then you may write to the Chief Executive, NACCC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Friary Chambers, 26-34 Friar Lane, Nottingham NG1 6DQ. However it should be noted that the role of NACCC in such cases will be to facilitate a satisfactory conclusion to the

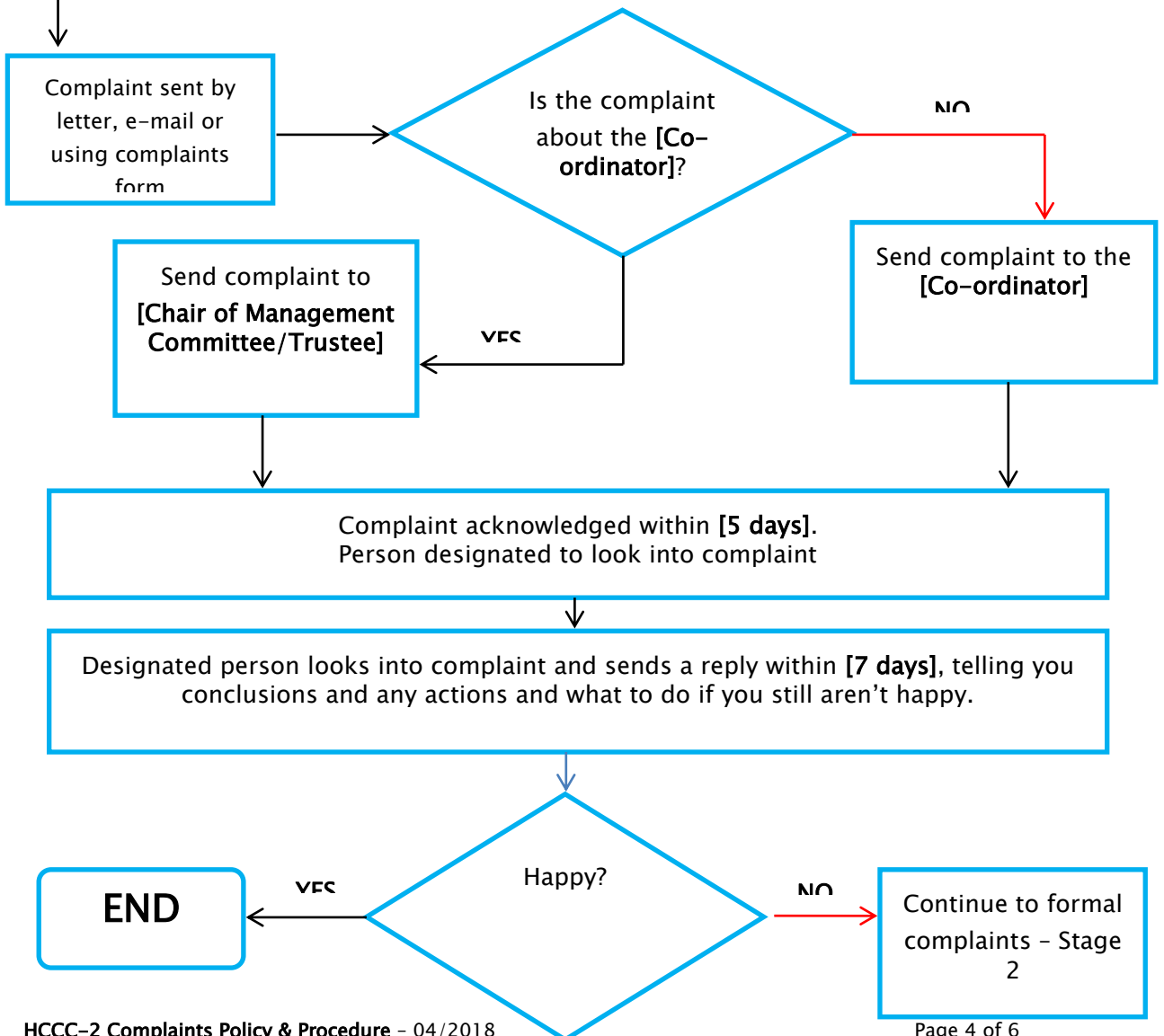
complaint rather than to conduct a formal investigation. As a membership organisation NACCC has no responsibility for the staffing or day to day running of member centres, however they do advise, support and accredit centres and require member centres to work to the highest standards.

COMPLAINTS FLOW CHART

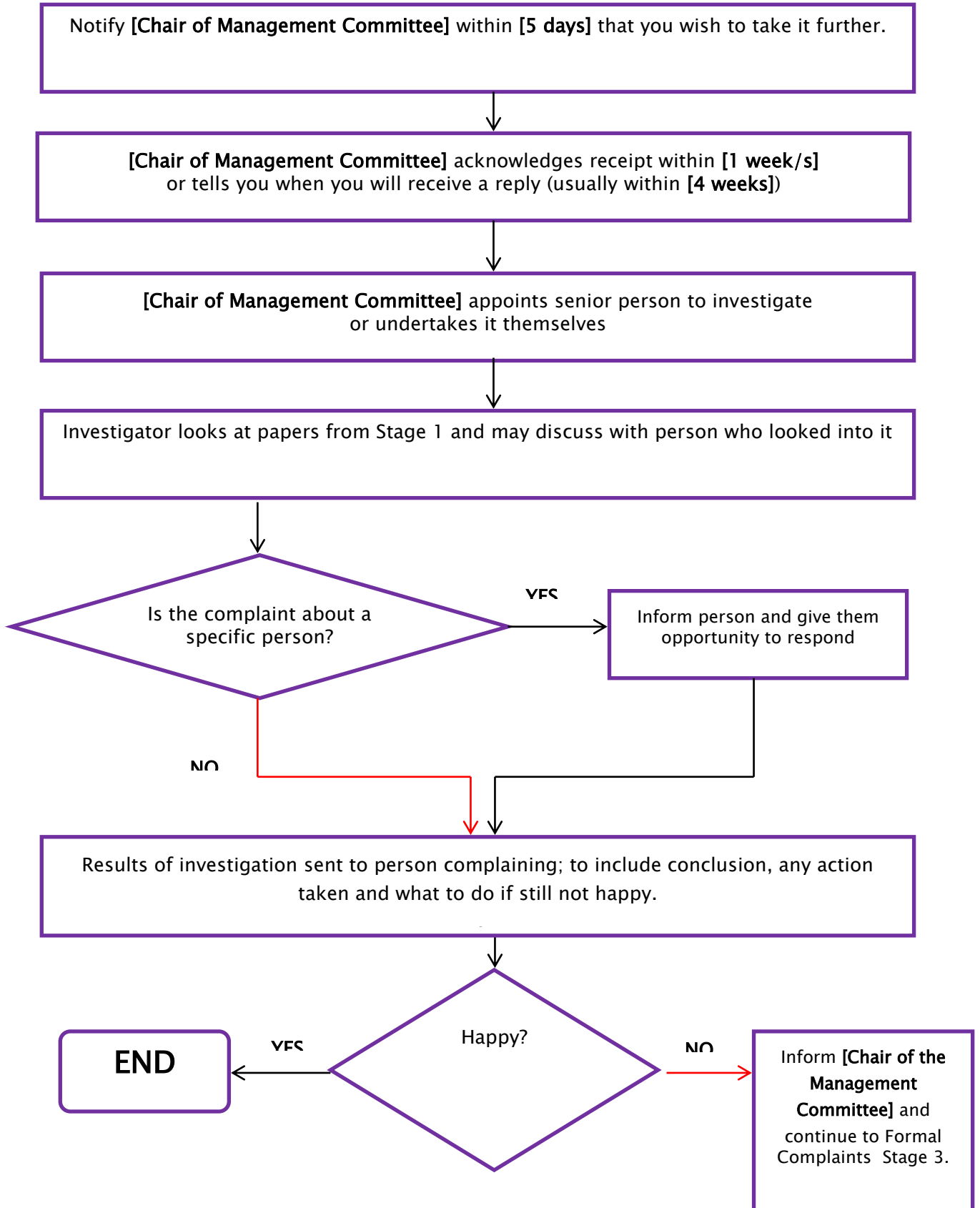
INFORMAL COMPLAINTS STAGE 1



FORMAL COMPLAINTS \_ STAGE 1



**FORMAL COMPLAINTS STAGE 2**



## FORMAL COMPLAINTS STAGE 3

Notify [Chair of Management Committee] within [5 days] that you wish to take it further.

[Chair of Management Committee] will convene a panel of 3 [Committee members/Trustees] (not including person who investigated at Stage 2)

Invitation sent to Complainant to attend meeting to discuss

Panel looks at all papers and may speak to Staff or Volunteers involved.

Meeting held to discuss with complainant.

Panel decides on conclusion and any action and informs the Complainant within [4 weeks]

**Final Decision**

**END**

YES

Complainant happy  
that procedure has  
been followed?

NO

Write to Chief  
Executive of  
NACCC.