

DIVERSITY POLICY

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Foundations West Midlands
Registered Charity 1113091

FOUNDATIONS WEST MIDLANDS

DIVERSITY POLICY

Foundations West Midlands is a Registered Charity founded upon and operated according to Christian beliefs and values. It seeks to uphold and promote the value of marriage as the ideal expression of partnership and basis of family life in society today. It also recognises the reality of failed relationships and family breakdown, and the need to offer support and assistance to those individuals experiencing separation and divorce.

Foundations is committed to being available to all who would seek its services, irrespective of their ethnicity, race, nationality, religious belief or sexuality. Foundations does not expect or require service users to be of the Christian faith or necessarily be sympathetic to Christian beliefs and values. Nor will Foundations' personnel seek in any way to persuade any service users towards adherence to the Christian faith, although Foundations reserves the right to reference Christian principles in its seminar and discussion materials.

Foundations will endeavour to provide a service sensitive to particular and diverse cultural needs and considerations and to this end may consider the commissioning of advisors or consultants as appropriate. [<Back to top>](#)

FOUNDATIONS WEST MIDLANDS

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Foundations West Midlands is committed to treating all who use its services with respect, sensitivity and dignity at all times. Foundations also seeks to continually review and enhance its practices and wishes to use comments from service users to inform this process.

Comments and Compliments:

Foundations welcomes comments on the services it provides. Comments may include any suggested modifications or improvements to the way services may be delivered in the future.

It is helpful for Foundations to know when a good service has been received.

Any service user wishing to make a comment or compliment can either pass this on to the person they have been dealing with directly, or convey it to the Chair of the Trustees. Such comments may be made either verbally or in writing.

Complaints:

The Foundations' Complaints Procedure can be used when the service provided is perceived to have fallen short of the expected standards. The following describes the process and format of the Complaints Procedure -

Who can complain?

Due to the confidential nature of the work undertaken by Foundations, complaints will not be accepted from a third party on behalf of an individual in receipt of Foundations' services.

Process and Timescale:

Stage One – Informal Resolution

In the first instance the matter should be raised by the complainant directly with the person concerned. This can be verbally or in writing. The complainant should seek to specify and clarify the nature of the complaint and state the outcome or redress they are seeking. The parties involved should seek to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the matter.

The complainant should raise the issue within **one calendar month** of the alleged incident, giving rise to the complaint, taking place.

The parties involved should arrange to meet within **14 days** of the complaint being communicated and both parties should seek to resolve the issue within **one calendar month** of such communication.

Stage Two – Formal investigation - If Stage one does not reach a satisfactory resolution, or if the complainant believes the complaint relates to professional misconduct, the complainant should contact the Chair of the Trustees to request a formal investigation. The request should preferably, but not necessarily, be in writing. The complainant should specify and clarify the nature of the complaint and state the outcome or redress they are seeking. The request to the Chair of the Trustees must be made within **one calendar month** of the conclusion of Stage One.

The Chair of the Trustees will appoint him/herself or another trustee to investigate the complaint. The investigator will meet separately with the parties involved, and will meet with any other Foundations' personnel who had any involvement with the matter. The investigator will make brief notes of each meeting. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will inform the complainant in writing of his or her conclusions, together with an explanation of the basis of these conclusions. A copy of this letter will also be sent to those directly concerned. The investigator will complete his or her investigation within **six weeks** of receipt of the request for a formal investigation.

Stage Three – Independent Investigation

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal investigation he or she can write to the Chair of the Trustees to request an Independent Investigation. This request must be made within **14 days** of receiving the response to the formal investigation. The complainant must specify the aspect or aspects of the formal investigation with which he or she remains dissatisfied. On receiving this request, the Chair of the Trustees will, within **14 days**, appoint an independent investigator – a suitably qualified or experienced person who is independent of Foundations. Any costs incurred in the process would be divided equally between Foundations and the complainant.

The task of the independent investigator is to examine whether the formal investigation properly and comprehensively adhered to the Foundations Complaints Policy and Procedure. The task is not to re-examine the complaint. The independent investigator will be provided with all written documentation completed during stage two and will seek any necessary clarification from the stage two investigator. Upon completion of his or her enquiries the independent investigator will provide a report of his/her findings to the Chair of the Trustees. This process will be completed within **six weeks** his/her appointment. Upon receiving the independent investigator's report the Chair of the Trustees will write to the complainant outlining the findings of the independent investigation. A copy of the letter will be sent to those directly concerned.

The findings of the independent investigator mark the final stage of the Foundations Complaints Procedure. The independent investigator should, on completion of the investigation, return all documentation to the Chair of Trustees.

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Foundations West Midlands accepts the importance of keeping secure all personal information obtained and recorded during the course of working with its service users. It is therefore committed to upholding the following principles and standards.

Sharing of information:

Recorded data

Foundations will maintain an electronic data record of those using its services. This will consist only of names and contact details and will be used solely for internal purposes and not published in any form. This data record may be used to generate a statistical return for potential funding providers and other interested bodies of the range and volume of Foundations activities, but will not contain any information which could lead to the identification of any individual service user. Electronic data will be password protected and only accessible to authorised Foundations' personnel.

Personal information

Foundations' personnel will make brief written notes of each session. This is for the purpose of an aide memoire in order to maintain continuity between sessions. To avoid identification by unauthorised personnel, individuals will be identified in such notes by initials or a pseudonym. Notes may be in written or electronic form. Individuals will have access to any such notes relating to them. Where individuals have been seen on their own, partners may have access to these notes with the individual's permission.

No personal information, whether verbal or written, will be passed on to any other individual or authority unless -

- a) to involve an independent complaint investigator
- b) it is reasonably believed that not to do so will represent a risk to the personal safety of the individual or any other person or persons.

Where information is passed to a third party in this manner, the individual concerned will be informed, unless it is reasonably believed that to do so will compromise the safety of the individual concerned or any other person or persons.

Breach of confidentiality

Any person who believes Foundations, or any person working on their behalf has breached the terms of this policy is entitled to make use of the Foundations Complaints Policy and Procedure. [<Back to top>](#)

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CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

In the course of its work with couples and individuals Foundations' personnel will not engage directly with children and young people. Foundations nonetheless recognises that children can be affected by difficulties in parental relationships, even if such difficulties are transitory. This policy reflects the need for Foundations' personnel to be aware of these dynamics and consequences, and to take appropriate action as and when the need arises.

In working with couples, either separated or in a relationship, Foundations' personnel will be alert to any mention or inference that children may be suffering physical or emotional harm, or neglect, as a result of parental behaviour, conflict or other potentially harmful family dynamic. Where this may occur, Foundations' personnel will respond in any of the following ways, depending on the perceived gravity of the situation.

- Seek to discuss further with the parent(s) the position of the child and whether support or assistance from an outside person or agency is necessary.
- Make a referral to the local authority children's services or NSPCC if there is evidence to suggest the child is at risk of significant harm. The parents should be informed in advance of making the referral unless to do so will compromise the safety of the child or any other individual in a vulnerable position. Any decision to make a referral should first be discussed with a Foundations' coordinator. If a child is seen to be in immediate danger the relevant emergency services should be alerted.
- Where parents are separated and one parent makes allegations that a child is at risk from the other parent or significant adult, the parent making the allegation should be advised to refer the matter to the local authority if he or she has genuine, founded concerns. [<Back to top>](#)

foundations

marriage and relationship support

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