

Complaints Policy

Neurodiversity Ireland

Reviewed and updated: August 2026



Neurodiversity Ireland is committed to providing a high-quality support service to everyone who comes into contact with our charity, and we welcome the views of children, young people, parents and carers. We understand that families may, at times, have a concern or item of feedback. We are committed to giving careful attention and a courteous, timely response to your suggestions, comments or complaints, so that we can learn from them and continuously improve. Complaints will be accepted and investigated irrespective of the nature of the complaint or who is making it.

Principle: This policy is underpinned by the Child Care Act (Consolidated), the Children First Act 2015, and Tusla's Regulatory Framework.

About Our Services

Neurodiversity Ireland provides group-based play support, therapy services, assistive technology and family support for neurodivergent children, and training for schools, delivered from our Centre of Excellence for Neurodiversity in Sandymount, Dublin. Our services include the Sensory Centre and Thrive Hub, and reach families across Ireland through our national training and community programmes. All of our services are inclusive, child-led and neuro-affirmative, applying a trauma-informed lens and a Persistent Drive for Autonomy (PDA)-informed approach, based upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model of support.

Our aim across every service is to support children's autonomy and build their confidence to make genuine connections and participate in life as fully as possible, at their own pace and on their own terms.

Neurodiversity Ireland is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with. If you have any comments or complaints about our service, we would like to hear from you. We are committed to listening to your complaints and treating them seriously so that we can learn from them and continuously improve our service. In the first instance, Neurodiversity Ireland hopes that complaints can be handled informally. Where a complaint cannot be handled informally, we advise individuals to follow the procedure set out in this policy. All complaints made are treated confidentially.

Our Values

Neurodiversity Ireland endeavours to fulfil the following values in all aspects of our work:

- Respectful partnership
- Neuroaffirmative, rights and strengths-based practice
- Focusing on the needs and well-being of the children attending our service
- Positive engagement with parents and carers
- Openness and sharing of information
- Professional and efficient service

How to Make a Complaint

Accessibility and Language Support

We are committed to making our complaints process accessible to everyone. If you require assistance due to a disability, language barrier or other support needs, please let us know. We can help with completing forms, offer alternative formats (for example Easy Read or large print), or arrange for an interpreter or advocate where necessary.

Children Making Complaints

Neurodiversity Ireland recognises that children have the right to express concerns and have their voices heard. We encourage children to share feedback in ways that feel comfortable to them.

- Children may speak directly to a trusted staff member.
- Children may draw a picture, use a story, or fill out a simple child-friendly form to express how they feel.
- Staff are trained to listen sensitively and support children in communicating their thoughts or concerns.
- All complaints from children are taken seriously and handled with care, with child protection procedures followed where necessary.

Informal Complaints

In the first instance, Neurodiversity Ireland invites all parents and guardians to make a complaint informally. This should ideally be done in person, as a conversation with a team leader, manager or staff member. Where possible, we endeavour to handle all complaints informally. We aim to ensure making a complaint is as easy as possible, and to deal with it promptly and politely. We endeavour to learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review this complaints policy and procedures annually. We aim to resolve a complaint informally as soon as possible, and within a maximum of 5 working days.

If your complaint cannot be dealt with informally, we will direct you to our formal complaints procedure.

Formal Complaints

There are certain circumstances in which a complaint cannot be handled informally. In these circumstances we direct parents and guardians to make a formal complaint in writing. If you wish to make a formal complaint, we request that you follow the steps below.

You can make a formal complaint:

- By email: servicedelivery@neurodiversityireland.com
- By post, addressed to Neurodiversity Ireland, Centre of Excellence for Neurodiversity, 2-4 Claremont Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4

If you have difficulty submitting a complaint in writing, please contact us by phone or in person and we can support you with making the complaint.

Please include the following information when making a complaint:

- Name, address, a daytime telephone number and an email address
- Full details of the complaint, including relevant dates and times
- Names of those involved (including staff)
- What you are hoping to achieve (for example, an apology or explanation)
- Copies of any relevant documentation
- Your preferred method of communication

You may use the complaint form in the appendix of this policy if you wish.

Dealing With Your Formal Complaint

1. We will formally acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days.
2. We will assess the complaint and the level of risk posed. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security, our response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

3. Neurodiversity Ireland will confirm that the issue raised in the complaint is within the control of the service. Where more than one issue is raised, we will determine whether each issue needs to be addressed separately.
4. Neurodiversity Ireland will address the complaint and will let you know if this includes an investigation. If the complaint is straightforward, someone from the service will generally investigate, and we will let you know who this is.
5. If necessary, an investigation panel is formed to investigate the complaint. The people investigating the complaint are in no way involved in it, and are not related to the complainant or to any staff members involved. Following the investigation, a separate HR procedure may need to be invoked.
6. A full response to the complaint will be issued within 30 working days.
7. If there is a delay to this timeline, we will notify the person making the complaint as soon as possible.
8. The person making the complaint will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint throughout.

Investigation

Depending on the nature of the complaint received, the Centre Manager, Head of Service Delivery, CEO or Board of Trustees will determine the type of investigation that will take place. All complaints are thoroughly and objectively investigated, and the investigation is handled appropriately and sensitively. The person investigating will first aim to establish the facts related to the case. In complex cases, an investigation plan will be drawn up outlining how the complaint will be investigated, and all relevant evidence will be considered. We may need to meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint further; complainants can bring a person with them to any such meeting. All staff must participate in the investigation of a complaint, as required, and any staff member involved in the complaint will be supported throughout the process.

Outcome and Response

Following the formal investigation of your complaint, we will let you know what we have found via your preferred form of communication. If necessary, we will produce a longer report explaining how and why we reached our conclusions, and outlining any changes to policies, procedures, practice or risk management arising from the investigation. Where no grounds for the complaint are found, the person making the complaint will be notified and information about the next stage will be provided. We will share any recommendations from our investigation with the complainant and with all relevant staff, and we will outline the appeals process as part of our response.

Internal Escalation Pathway

Where a complaint requires escalation beyond the initial investigation, Neurodiversity Ireland follows a clear internal escalation pathway from the service user through to Board level, so that every complaint reaches the right level of authority and oversight.



All complaints reported quarterly to the Board

- Service User: raises a concern or complaint, informally or formally, as set out above, with our Sensory Centre Manager or Clinical or other Staff member.
- Head of Services: reviews the formal complaint and determines what investigation is required, if any.
- CEO: reviews and formally responds to complaints that cannot be resolved by the Head of Services, including complaints escalated from an initial investigation.
- Clinical Governance Committee: complaints with a clinical, safeguarding or complex practice dimension are escalated to the Clinical Governance Committee for review, consideration or resolution.
- Board of Trustees: complaints not resolved at CEO or Clinical Governance Committee level, or which raise matters of organisational risk or governance, are escalated to the Board of Trustees as the final internal point of escalation.
- All complaints are reported upon quarterly to our Board of Trustees.

If a complainant remains dissatisfied following this internal pathway, the Appeal and Independent Review routes set out below remain available.

Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, they have the opportunity to appeal. The appeal must be submitted within 5 working days. The appeal is handled by someone who was not involved in the original complaint process.

Independent Review

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeals process, you have the right to escalate the matter to an external body. As a part HSE-funded service, you may also contact the HSE directly through Your Service Your Say (www.hse.ie/yoursay, or freephone 1800 424 555). You may also contact:

- The Ombudsman for Children (www.oco.ie)
- The Office of the Ombudsman, for adult service users (www.ombudsman.ie)

These organisations are independent and can review complaints about public services in Ireland.

Record of Complaints and Confidentiality

An accurate and detailed record of each complaint is kept for a period of 2 years from the date the complaint has been dealt with. Complaint information is stored confidentially within the service and is only accessed by Neurodiversity Ireland. The people who have access to complaint records are named at the end of this policy.

Complaints Not Within the Scope of the Service

Any complaints not within the scope of the service to investigate will be referred appropriately. For example:

- If there are child safeguarding concerns relating to a complaint, the designated liaison person is informed, and the child protection policy is followed.
- If a complaint involves a potential criminal offence, An Garda Síochána is notified.

Where a complaint relates to Neurodiversity Ireland and the complainant does not want to make the complaint to Neurodiversity Ireland directly, unsolicited information can be submitted to the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

What We Expect from Complainants

We believe that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected. We also consider that our staff have the same rights, and we expect you to be polite and courteous in your dealings with us. We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour, unreasonable demands, or unreasonable persistence.

Policy Ownership and Review

Policy Detail	Information
Persons with access to complaint records	Sensory Centre Manager; Director of Operations; Head of Services and CEO.
Person responsible for this policy	Nessa Hill, Chief Executive Officer
Adopted	4 July 2024. Reviewed 10 October 2024 and 15 April 2025. Reviewed and updated 12 August 2026.
Next review due	August 2027

Appendix: Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it by email or post using the details in the Formal Complaints section above, or hand it to a staff member.

Name	
Address	
Telephone / Email	
Date	

Details of Complaint

Names of those involved

What outcome are you hoping for?

Signature of Complainant / Date

**Signature of person receiving complaint /
Date**

