



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dominic Deeson", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dominic Deeson
Chair of Trustees
Faversham Foodbank

Registered Charity Number: 1158413

Procedure control

Complaints Procedure Version 2.0

Board of Trustees approved: 29 July 2026

For review: August 2028

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Purpose

Faversham Foodbank is committed to treating everyone with dignity, compassion and respect.

We aim to provide a safe, welcoming and high-quality service to people who access our support as well as volunteers, donors, referral agencies, partner organisations, and members of the public.

We welcome feedback and recognise that complaints provide an important opportunity to listen, learn and improve our services.

We are committed to handling complaints fairly, consistently, sensitively and in a timely manner.

This procedure sets out how complaints relating to Faversham Foodbank will be managed.

Our commitment

Faversham Foodbank seeks to ensure that:

- Everyone is treated fairly and without discrimination.
- Concerns and complaints are taken seriously.
- Complaints are investigated impartially.
- Individuals raising concerns are not disadvantaged for doing so.
- Lessons learned from complaints inform continuous improvement.
- Appropriate safeguarding action is taken where concerns relate to the welfare of children, young people, or adults at risk.

Scope

This procedure applies to complaints concerning:

- The quality or delivery of Foodbank services.
- The conduct of staff, volunteers or trustees.
- Behaviour that does not reflect our values of dignity, compassion and respect.
- Communication and customer service.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion concerns.
- Confidentiality and data handling.
- Decisions made by the Foodbank.

This procedure does not apply to:

- Safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse, which will be managed in accordance with the Foodbank's Safeguarding Policy.
- Whistleblowing concerns raised by staff or volunteers, which will be dealt with under the Whistleblowing Policy.
- Employment-related matters, which will be managed through relevant employment procedures.
- Criminal matters, which may be referred to the police or other statutory agencies.

Raising a complaint

Complaints should normally be made within three months of the incident occurring.

Complaints may be made:

- In person;
- By telephone;
- By email;
- In writing;
- Through an advocate or representative acting on behalf of the complainant.

Complainants should provide:

- Their name and contact details;
- Details of the complaint;
- Dates, times and locations where relevant;
- Names of those involved, where known;
- Any supporting information;
- The outcome they would like to achieve.

Complaints should be sent to:

The Complaints Trustee

Faversham Foodbank, % The Gospel Mission, Tanners Street, Faversham ME13 7JL

Email: complaints@faversham.foodbank.org.uk

Where the complaint concerns the Complaints Trustee, it should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees at chasir@faversham.foodbank.org.uk

Where the complaint concerns a trustee, it should be referred to the Chair of Trustees or, if appropriate, another designated trustee.

Safeguarding

Faversham Foodbank is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

If a complaint identifies concerns about abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion, or an individual's immediate safety, these concerns will be managed under the Safeguarding Policy and may be referred to statutory agencies where necessary.

Safeguarding concerns will always take precedence over the complaints process.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed where appropriate.

Complaint handling process

Stage One - Informal resolution

We encourage concerns to be raised as soon as possible so that they can be resolved informally wherever appropriate.

Many issues can be addressed through discussion, clarification or an apology.

We aim to respond to informal concerns within **five working days**.

Stage Two - Formal complaint investigation

If a matter cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be made.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, Faversham Foodbank will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within five working days;
- Identify an appropriate person to investigate the matter;
- Inform Trussell a formal complaint has been made;
- Review available records and evidence;
- Speak with relevant staff, volunteers or witnesses as necessary;
- Ensure the investigation is conducted fairly and impartially.

We aim to provide a written response within **20 working days**.

Where an investigation is likely to take longer, the complainant will be informed of the reasons and given an updated timescale.

The response will include:

- A summary of the complaint;
- Findings from the investigation;
- Any actions taken or proposed;
- Information about how to request a review if dissatisfied.

Stage Three - Trustee review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review within **20 working days** of receiving the Stage Two response.

The review will be undertaken by trustees who have not previously been involved in the complaint.

Trustees will consider:

- The original complaint;
- The investigation undertaken;
- Whether procedures were followed appropriately;
- Any additional information submitted.

A written outcome will normally be provided within **20 working days**.

The decision following trustee review will be final.

Confidentiality

Complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Information will only be shared with those directly involved in investigating and resolving the complaint.

Records relating to complaints will be retained securely and processed in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and the Foodbank's Privacy Policy.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Faversham Foodbank is committed to ensuring that everyone can raise concerns without fear of discrimination or disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to support individuals who may face barriers in accessing the complaints process, including assistance with communication, literacy, language, or disability-related needs.

Learning and continuous improvement

Complaints are an important source of learning and accountability.

Themes arising from complaints may be reported to the Board of Trustees to support:

- Service improvements;
- Policy development;
- Volunteer and staff training;
- Risk management;
- Safeguarding oversight.