

## **Joseph Rowntree Theatre Concern and Complaints Policy & Procedure**

### **Scope**

A concern is defined as an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which you would like some reassurance.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre.

This policy applies to our Joseph Rowntree Theatre volunteers & Performers, organisations, or individuals hiring the theatre as well as the general public.

We are committed to maintaining high standards across all aspects of our work. If we are not getting it right, we want to know. Whilst we take great care to ensure that we provide all our services efficiently, courteously and to a high standard, we accept that concerns or complaints may be made. A concern or complaint is a valid expression of dissatisfaction and we will seek to understand the issue and how we can improve.

The trustees of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre view both concerns and complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person (or organisation) that has raised an issue that is important to them.

This policy is not intended to be used for complaints about the artistic nature of any productions at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre.

### **Our policy is:**

- To provide a fair concern and complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to raise a concern or make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our concern and complaints procedure so that people know how to raise a concern or to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre knows what to do if a concern is raised or a complaint is received.
- To make sure any concerns raised are addressed and responded to promptly and issues are addressed.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information that helps us to improve what we do.

If your concern is related to the safeguarding of children or adults at risk, please contact our designated safeguarding officer Juliette Risingham ([juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk](mailto:juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk)).

## Principles

In raising a concern or making a complaint we believe most people want:

- to be listened to;
- to have the problem accepted as important;
- to be offered a solution or explanation;
- to have their distress acknowledged;
- to be assured the same thing will not happen again.

It is therefore essential that people raising a concern or a complaint are given the opportunity to be heard and involved in finding solutions.

## Our Procedure

If you have a concern or complaint about us, we want to hear about it and we will do our best to put it right. We aim to deal with complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively, and ensure that all concerns and complaints are handled in a consistent manner.

## Informal Concern

When something isn't quite right or you are unhappy with something and you want to ask questions about it or raise an informal concern please speak to or contact the most appropriate person.

The following explains who is best to contact to raise your concern.

- Volunteers - ideally the trustee responsible for the area of the theatre where you volunteer, but you can contact any trustee.
- Performers and volunteers as part of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre Company - any member of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre Company committee.
- Organisations or individuals hiring the theatre - please contact our Executive Support Officer Juliette Risingham by email [juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk](mailto:juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk) or by phone 01904501935 and select option 3.
- A member of the public - please contact our Executive Support Officer Juliette Risingham by email [juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk](mailto:juliette.risingham@jrtheatre.co.uk) or by phone 01904501935 and select option 3.

We aim to deal with any concern raised as quickly as possible, ideally, a concern will be addressed verbally through a discussion to understand the points and to explain the situation. Naturally, it may be appropriate that a concern is also dealt with by email.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your concern you may pursue a formal complaint. You may also raise a formal complaint without first raising it informally as a concern

## **Formal Complaint**

The formal complaint process has two stages

### **Stage One**

You may send your complaint to us in either of the following forms:

Email: [secretary@jrtheatre.co.uk](mailto:secretary@jrtheatre.co.uk)

Write to:

Company Secretary  
Joseph Rowntree Theatre  
Haxby Road  
York  
YO31 8TA

When you make a complaint, please include the following information:

- Describe clearly what happened – include the date, time and location of the incident.
- Tell us why you are making a complaint, what went wrong, and how you think we should put it right.
- Provide your full name, email address and contact phone number.

How we respond to your complaint:

- You will receive acknowledgement of your complaint within 5 working days.
- You may be contacted to obtain any additional information that we may require to help us resolve the complaint.
- You will receive a response to your complaint within 30 working days of its receipt.
- We may need more time for complex issues. In these cases, the 30 days may be extended, if this happens we will keep you informed.

At the end of the investigation, a summary report of the findings of the investigation into the complaint will be written.

The outcome of the complaint will be provided to the complainant.

We are unable to accept formal or informal complaints through message boards or social media.

If a criminal offence is alleged, then the police will be informed.

### **Stage Two – Chair of Trustees**

If we have not resolved the complaint to your satisfaction, please bring the matter to the attention of our Chair of Trustees by writing to them using the same contact details as stated in Stage One.

Please explain clearly why you feel that your complaint has not been properly resolved and the outcome and actions you would hope for.

The same response times will apply as at Stage One.

Formal Stage Two complaints will be investigated by two trustees.

The outcome of Stage Two is the end of the process.

### **Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason.

We might decide a complaint goes straight to a stage Two complaint (for example if multiple complaints are received for the same issue).

Varying the process may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

### **Can you take your complaint elsewhere?**

We encourage you to contact us directly to resolve your complaint in the first instance, but you can contact the Charity Commission and make a complaint at any point. Details of how to make a complaint with the Charity Commission can be found here as well as the type of complaints they will consider:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-charities/complaints-about-charities>

### **Confidentiality**

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

### **Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees.