

# **Pearl of Africa Children's Choir Ltd**

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Principles of PoACC's Complaints Procedure**

- PoACC treats complaints and comments as an important part of supporters' and public feedback, and an opportunity to improve. Therefore, if you have encountered a problem please tell us.
- We also welcome your suggestions regarding ways in which the issue leading to the complaint might be addressed.
- PoACC endeavours to investigate complaints fully, fairly and promptly. Please remember that we shall be unable to investigate and deal with your complaints promptly or effectively unless you tell us all the specific facts you have: such as names, dates, places, and other relevant details.
- We deal with complaints in confidence, unless others could be at risk due to matters to which the complaint has alerted us; but please note that our investigations might require us to contact others. If there are particular points you consider confidential, please identify them.

If you submit a complaint, please bear in mind the principles set out above.

Please also consider the objectives and remit of The Pearl of Africa Children's Choir Ltd. We are a UK charity (of modest size) whose main purposes are to further education and the relief of poverty in Uganda. Currently, this primarily involves supporting with funds and expertise the Molly and Paul Childcare Foundation of Uganda, a well-established local NGO: its roots are in a small school founded over 25 years ago, and today it looks after approximately 2,500 children.

If your comments or complaint are really to do with the activities of the Molly and Paul Childcare Foundation, please address your comments or complaint direct to the Foundation in Uganda, and send PoACC a copy, to keep us informed.

## **What constitutes a complaint and who can make one**

A complaint, which may be written or spoken, is an expression of dissatisfaction. Either individual members of the public, or groups comprised of members of the public, can make a complaint.

## **How to tell us about your complaints or comments**

### **Stage 1 (Informal)**

- As a first step, please write or speak to the PoACC individual concerned, and try to resolve the complaint informally.
- If you have not been dealing with any individual at PoACC, please call or email PoACC's Hon. Secretary at: [enquiries@pearlof africa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@pearlof africa.org.uk)
- Or post a letter to the Hon. Secretary at the Correspondence Address set out at the end.

### **Stage 2 (Formally Registering a Complaint)**

If you are unsatisfied with the response you have received at Stage 1, please proceed to stage 2 of PoACC's complaints procedure:

- Outline the factual background and details of your complaint by letter or email and send it to the Hon. Secretary at: [enquiries@pearlof africa.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@pearlof africa.org.uk) or the Correspondence Address at the end.
- PoACC will normally acknowledge your complaint in writing or by email within 7 working days from the date it is received. The acknowledgement will contain the name of the person responsible for the complaint's investigation, as well as the start date of the investigation.
- You will normally receive a full response to your complaint within 21 working days from the start of the investigation. This response will be provided in writing and will include the following information:
  - Details of the investigation.
  - A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not, and the reasons for the decision.

- And where appropriate, the solution.
- Alternatively, if PoACC is not itself in a position to investigate the complaint, we may refer the matter to the appropriate authority, such as social services; if so, we shall inform you of this.

If it seems likely that in the circumstances of the case the above time limits cannot be met, complainants will be notified in writing. This notification will provide new timelines and an explanation of the delay.

PoACC's work is undertaken primarily by volunteers. Given our limited resources, there are a few exceptions when PoACC may decide not to respond to a complaint: for example, in the following unusual circumstances:

- where a complainant unreasonably pursues a complaint that PoACC considers has already been dealt with.
- where a complainant is being abusive or offensive in her or his manner, or where a complainant is harassing a member of PoACC's personnel.

We shall endeavour, following the procedure set out in this document, to respond in a satisfactory way to the complaint you raise. If you do have comments or complaints you wish to make, please do so promptly after the events in question, for it might be impossible or impractical for us to investigate complaints that are stale; for example, relating to events more than 3 months old. Please also note that whilst anonymous complaints will, where practical, be investigated in order to improve our service, PoACC cannot respond to complaints made anonymously.

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[www.pearlof africa.org.uk](http://www.pearlof africa.org.uk)

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