



ELT Complaints Policy

2021/2022

Signed by:

Michelle Murray, Executive Principal /
CEO

Date: 22/09/2021

Signed by:

Helen White, Chair of Trustees

Date: 22/09/2021

Revision History

Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author / Reviser	Document Approver
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25/09/2019	1.1	Document annual review. Minor amendments and reformatting, no significant changes. Ratified on 25/09/2019 then circulated to Academies.	Jill Jones, SBM	Trust Board 25/09/19
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Introduction

The Trustees of the Education Learning Trust have approved and adopted this procedure to allow parents/carers of pupils attending schools of the ELT to raise a concern or complaint. The policy also makes provisions for concerns or complaints received from persons other than parents / carers or pupils.

This procedure does not apply to concerns and complaints relating to the matters listed in Annex 1.

The aims of the procedure are:

- to deal with any complaint against a school or any individual connected with it by following the correct procedure;
- to deal with all complaints thoroughly and by being open, honest and fair when dealing with the complainant.

All staff will be made aware of this complaints procedure and are expected to review this policy regularly in order that they are familiar with our process of dealing with complaints and can be of assistance when an issue is brought to their attention.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to this procedure where required to ensure that all complainants can access and complete this complaints procedure.

Understanding this procedure

The trust expects all complainants to make reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution.

In order to investigate your complaint as fully as possible, we have implemented a staged approach, a summary of which is set out at Appendix 1. We anticipate that almost all complaints that arise will be resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2 below.

We expect our members of staff to be addressed in a respectful manner and for communication to remain calm at all times. The procedure under Part 3 of this policy will only be used on very rare occasions to deal with unreasonably persistent complainants or unreasonable complainant behaviour.

To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event (the subject of the complaint) will not be considered.

An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure

unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales.

In this procedure:

- 'complaint' means an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.
- 'concern' means an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.
- 'meeting' means an in person or virtual meeting (ie telephone or video conference where all parties can participate verbally), virtual meetings will only be held in the event that all parties have access to appropriate equipment to attend and are happy to do so. If the parties are unable to meet virtually and the meeting must take place in person, the meeting may be postponed until it is deemed safe to hold an in person meeting, at the discretion of the trust.
- 'parent' means a parent, carer or anyone with legal responsibility for a child;
- 'school days' excludes weekends and academy holidays and periods of partial or total academy closure;
- 'trust' means the academy trust

Where a complaint is received outside of term time, we will consider it to have been received on the first school day following the holiday period.

On rare occasions, an academy may receive complaints from a number of parents relating to the same issue. In order to deal with these complaints efficiently the academy will follow the procedure set out in Part 4.

If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority safeguarding teams or tribunals/courts, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

Complainants should not approach individual governor or trustee to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may prevent them from considering complaints at later stages.

PART 1: Complaints Procedure for Parents

Stage 1: Informal concerns

Many enquiries and concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily by the class teacher, or

other members of staff without the need to resort to the formal procedure. We value informal meetings and discussions and encourage parents to approach staff with any concerns they may have, and aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Where issues are not able to be satisfactorily resolved by the class teacher, then this should always be referred to;

Primary Schools: Assistant Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher thereafter.

Secondary Schools: Class Teacher's line manager or head of year (as applicable)

It is always helpful if you can fully explain the nature of the concern and identify the outcome you are looking for. You may be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with that concern. The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure that you are clear on what action (if any) has been agreed. This may be put in writing if appropriate.

If the matter is brought to the attention of the Headteacher they may decide to deal with your concerns directly at this stage. If the concerns are about the Headteacher these should be referred directly to the Chair of the local governing body under Stage 2.

There is no suggested timescale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion, although it would be expected that most issues will be resolved within 15 school days. Where no satisfactory solution has been found, you will be advised that if you wish your concerns to be considered further you should write to the Headteacher under Stage 2 within 15 days.

Stage 2: Formal Written Complaints

If your concerns are not resolved under Stage 1 or you wish your concerns to be dealt with as a formal complaint, you should put your complaint in writing and send this to the Headteacher of the relevant school, which in the vast majority of cases will be the school which your child attends.

It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like us to take to resolve your complaint. We strongly encourage you to use the Complaint Form provided at Appendix 2 of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you. In all cases your written complaint must include:

- the nature of the complaint;
- details of how the matter has been dealt with so far;

- the names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of all relevant documents; and
- a clear statement of the actions that you would like us to take to resolve your complaint.

Your complaint will normally be acknowledged in writing within 5 school days of receipt. The acknowledgement will give a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint. This will normally be within 15 school days of receipt.

The Headteacher (or someone appointed by them) will usually invite you to a meeting to clarify your complaints and to explore possible resolutions. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by one other person, such as a friend, relative, advocate or interpreter, to assist you. Where possible, this meeting will take place within 10 school days of receipt of the written complaint.

It may be necessary for witness statements to be taken from pupils involved. The school should always ensure that cases are not focused on, or target individual pupils and statements taken will be in the full knowledge of parents, as they may wish to support/accompany their child. If this would seriously delay the investigation of a serious or urgent complaint or if the child has specifically said that they would prefer that their parents were not involved, another member of staff with whom the child feels comfortable should be present. The school may wish to reserve this right where there are safeguarding concerns about the pupil. If the complaint is against a member of staff then they must have the opportunity to present their case and seek advice if they so wish.

Once all the relevant facts have been established as far as possible, you will be provided with a written response to the complaint, including a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. This will include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint (if any). You will be advised that if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you may request that your complaint be heard by the Complaints Committee under Stage 3 of this procedure.

If in the early stages of the investigation, the Headteacher considers that the complaint is best dealt with immediately at Stage 3, it will be passed to the Chair of the school's local governing body/trustees and you will be informed of this action without delay.

What if the complaint is about the Headteacher?

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or if the Headteacher has been closely involved at Stage 1, your complaint should be sent to the Chair of the school's local governing body who will carry out all the Stage 2 procedures.

What if the complaint is about a member of the school's local governing body?

You should contact the Chair of the school's local governing body who will investigate the concerns in accordance with Stage 2. If the complaint is about the Chair of the school's local governing body you should contact the Vice Chair.

If the complaint is about the school's local governing body as a whole, you should send your complaint to the Chair of Trustees.

What if the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer?

If the complaint is about the CEO of the trust, or if they have been closely involved at Stage 1, your complaint should be sent to the Chair of Trustees who will arrange for trustee to carry out all the Stage 2 procedures.

What if the complaint is about a Trustee?

You should contact the Chair of Trustees, or the Vice Chair if the complaint is about the Chair, who will investigate the concerns in accordance with Stage 2.

If the complaint is about the governors, your complaint should be sent to the Chair of Trustees.

If your complaint is about the Trust Board as a whole, you should send your complaint to the Clerk of Governors who will arrange for the matter to be independently investigated.

Complaints for the attention of governors or trustees must be sent c/o Education Learning Trust, Hawthorn Road, Gatley, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK8 4NB

Stage 3: Referral to the Complaints Committee

If you are dissatisfied with the decision under Stage 2, you may request that a Complaints Committee be convened to consider your complaint. The Complaints Committee will not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

Your request will only be considered if you have completed the relevant procedures at Stages 1 and 2.

To request a hearing before the Complaints Committee, you should complete the **School Complaint Review Request Form** (Appendix 4) and send this to the Clerk of the local governing body at the school address OR where the complaint is concerned with the local governing body, sent for the attention of The Trustees, Education Learning Trust, Hawthorn Road, Gatley, SK8 4NB within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of Stage 2. This can be sent by registered post or password protected email.

You should ensure that you provide copies of all relevant documents and state all the grounds for your complaint and the outcome that you are looking for. This should make explicit the reasons for which you remain dissatisfied with outcomes of the Stage 2 investigation. Failure to do this may result in the complaint not being considered at Stage 3.

Your written request will be acknowledged within 5 school days of receipt.

The Clerk will arrange for a Complaints Committee to be convened, made up of at least three members, including:

- members of the school's local governing body and/or trustees (as appropriate) with no prior involvement in the matter; and,
- one person who is independent of the management and running of the school with no prior involvement in the matter.

The Clerk shall appoint one of these members to be the Chair of the Committee.

Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 20 school days of the receipt of your request. As soon as reasonably practicable and in any event at least 5 school days before the hearing, you will be sent written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, together with brief details of the committee members who will be present. Fair consideration will be given to any bona fide objection to a particular member of the committee. You will also be informed of the name of the person who will be presenting the case on behalf of the school (referred to in this policy as the 'school representative'). This may be the person who is the subject of the complaint, the person who undertook the investigation at Stage 2 or another person with sufficient knowledge of the matter.

The notification will also inform you of your right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend, relative, advocate or interpreter and explain how the meeting will be conducted. You should notify the Clerk in advance if you intend to bring anyone to the hearing.

If, despite best efforts, it is not possible to find a mutually convenient date and time for a hearing within a reasonable timeframe, the Clerk may determine that the hearing proceeds on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

A copy of the complaint and any other documents provided by you in support of your complaint or by the school in defence of the complaint will be provided to the Complaints Committee as soon as practicable upon receipt. Copies of these documents shall also be provided to you or Headteacher (as applicable) at least 3 school days before the hearing. The Complaints Committee reserves the right not to consider any documentation presented by either you or the school less than 3 school days prior to the hearing. The Complaints Committee is under no obligation to hear

oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and/or may take written statements into account. The committee will not normally accept recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The hearing will be conducted in such a way as to ensure that each party has the opportunity to address the Complaints Committee. The procedure to be followed during the hearing will be set out to the parties by letter in advance of the hearing. The Clerk will ensure that sufficient notes are taken to record an accurate reflection of the points considered and any decisions taken or actions agreed.

Unless otherwise stated, the procedure for the Stage 3 hearing is as follows:

- the parent and school representative enter the hearing together;
- the Chair of the Committee introduces the committee members and outlines the process;
- the parent will explain their complaint;
- the school representative and committee members will question the parent;
- the school representative will explain the school's actions;
- the parent and the committee members will question the school representative
- the parent will sum up their complaint;
- the school representative will sum up the school's actions;
- the Chair of the Committee will explain that both parties will hear from the committee within 10 school days;
- both parties will leave together while the committee decides;
- the Clerk will stay to assist the committee with its decision making.

The Clerk and or Complaints Committee reserves the right to modify the above procedure at their sole discretion, for example requiring the parent and the academy representative to present their complaint/actions separately to the Complaints Committee in the absence of the other party.

After the hearing, the Complaints Committee will consider their decision and inform you of their decision and, if relevant, the person complained about in writing within 10 school days. The outcome information must be available for inspection on the school premises by the Headteacher and CEO. The letter will set out the decision of the committee together with the reasons underpinning that decision. The committee can (by a majority if necessary):

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;

- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

Stage 4: Referral of complaint to Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Complaints Committee, you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) who has limited powers to review the handling of the complaint in accordance with ESFA's 'Procedure for dealing with complaints about Academies'.

The ESFA will consider complaints that fall into any of the following three categories:

1. where there is undue delay or the school did not comply with its own complaints procedures when considering a complaint;
2. where the school is in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State; or
3. where the school has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

At the time of writing this procedure, the ESFA procedure and-school complaints form are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy>

Or you can write to the ESFA at the following address:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
5 Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

Part 2: Concerns or Complaints from Other Persons

Part 1 of this complaints policy applies only to complaints made by parents or carers of current registered pupils of schools within the trust. However, the trust wishes to work closely with other members of the local community and will deal with their concerns and complaints as follows:

Stage 1 – a concern regarding an school or its operations may be made to any member of staff. That member of staff will attempt to resolve the matter immediately or may, if appropriate, refer the matter to their line manager or member of the senior leadership team (SLT) who is best placed to deal with the concern. It is expected that most concerns will be responded to orally or in writing within 5 school days. If a longer period is required, you will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

Stage 2 – where a concern is not resolved at stage 1, or you wish your concerns to be dealt with immediately as a formal complaint, you should put your complaint in writing and send this to the Headteacher of the relevant school to investigate. The

Headteacher may delegate the task of investigation and/or responding to the complaint to a member of SLT or may escalate the **complaint** straight to stage 3. A formal response to the complaint will usually be provided within 10 school days of receipt of the letter of complaint although if a longer period is required to respond, you will be kept updated.

Stage 3 - if you are not satisfied with the response at stage 2, you may request a review by writing to the school's Chair of the local governing body. You should write to the Chair within 10 school days of receipt of the letter at stage 2. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if **exceptional** circumstances apply. The Chair will consider the complaint alone or may convene a complaints committee on the same terms as set out in Part 1 of this complaints policy. The decision at this stage will usually be sent to you within 20 school days of receipt of the request for a review. The decision at stage 3 exhausts the school's complaints procedure.

Concerns or complaints regarding the Headteacher or the trust as a whole should be referred direct to the Clerk of Governors c/o Education Learning Trust, Hawthorn Road, Gatley, Cheeable, Cheshire SK8 4NB, who will arrange for the stages above to be considered by an appropriate person.

PART 3: Unreasonably Persistent Complainants and Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

There are rare circumstances where we will deviate from the Complaints Procedure set out in Part 1. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- where the complainant's behaviour or language towards staff, members of the local governing body or trustees is unacceptable, for example, is abusive, offensive or threatening;
- where, because of the frequency of their contact with the school, the complainant is hindering the consideration of their or other people's complaints and/or the proper running of the school;
 - a) refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
 - b) refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
 - c) refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
 - d) insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
 - e) introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
 - f) raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales

- g) makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
 - h) changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
 - i) seeks an unrealistic outcome, such as the inappropriate dismissal of staff
 - j) makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
 - k) knowingly provides falsified information
 - l) publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums
- where the complainant's complaint is clearly frivolous, vexatious and/or has patently insufficient grounds, including where the complainant uses Freedom of Information requests excessively and unreasonably. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator defines the characteristics of a 'frivolous' or 'vexatious' complaint as:
 - a) complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
 - b) insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
 - c) insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
 - d) complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
 - e) demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value
 - where the complainant's complaint is the same, similar to or based on the same facts of a complaint which has already been considered in full.

In the case of persistent or vexatious complaints and/or harassment, the school will verbally inform the complainant that their behaviour is considered to be becoming unreasonable / unacceptable and, if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy. This will be confirmed in writing.

If the complainant's behaviour is not modified the school will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, having regard to the nature of the complainant's behaviour and the effect of this on the school community:

- (a) inform the complainant in writing that their behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable/unacceptable and, therefore, to fall under the terms of this;
- (b) restrict the complainant's access to the school e.g. requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only), requiring contact to take place with a named person only, restricting telephone calls to specified days and times

- or banning the complainant from the school's premises;
- (c) inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties;
 - (d) conduct the Complaints Committee on the papers only i.e. not hold a hearing;
 - (e) refuse to consider the complaint and refer the complainant directly to Stage 4;
 - (f) consider putting in place a specific procedure for dealing with complaints from the complainant, i.e. the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the Headteacher but only with a third person to be identified by the school's local governing body, who will investigate, determine whether or not the concern / complaint is reasonable or vexatious and then advise the Headteacher accordingly.

In all cases we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.

We may take the decision not to respond to any further correspondence where:

- we have taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns
- the complainant has been given a clear statement of our position and their options and
- the complainant contacts us repeatedly, making substantially the same points each time

The case for ceasing further correspondence is stronger where:

- letters, emails, or telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive or make insulting personal comments about or threats towards staff
- we have reason to believe the complainant is contacting us with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, members of the school's local governing body or trustees, we will consider other options, for example reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

Part 4: Complaint campaigns

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint campaign is defined as a complaint from three or more separate individuals (whether or not connected with an academy or the trust) which are all based on the same subject.

Depending on the subject in question, we may deviate from the procedure set out in this policy and instead:

- send a template response to all complainants and/or
- publish a single response on the academy/trust's website (as applicable)

Records of complaints

A written record will be kept of all written formal complaints, including at what stage they were resolved and action taken by us as a result of those complaints regardless of whether they were upheld. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where;

- access is requested by the Secretary of State;
- disclosure is required in the course of a school inspection;
- under other legal authority.

We will make the findings and recommendations of the panel available for inspection by the trust and the CEO.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

The Board of Trustees monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. They also take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

APPENDIX 1 – The Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal

Complaints managed by relevant member of staff.

- issue to be resolved within 15 school days
- where no satisfactory solution has been found, parent to be advised they should proceed to stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal written complaint to: Headteacher

Complete parent complaint from Appendix 2 to submit a formal written complaint to the Headteacher.

The School should:

- Acknowledge complaint within 5 school working days.
- Offer to hold an investigation meeting scheduled to take place within 10 school days
- Respond within 15 school working days

In addition a copy of the complaints policy will be provided.

Stage 3 – To Governors complaints Committee

Complete **School Complaint Review Request Form** citing areas where you remain dissatisfied (Appendix 4).

Submit to Clerk of Governors (LGB) within 10 school working days of stage 2 outcome.

School should:

- Acknowledge within 5 school working days
- Convene committee within 20 school working days
- Invitation will be send at least 5 school working days prior to the meeting
- Copies of supporting documents shared 3 school working days prior to the meeting.
- Respond of outcome within 10 school working days.

Stage 4 – Referral of Complaint to Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

If you remain dissatisfied complete the ESFA Complaints form available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy>

Or you can write to the ESFA at the following address:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
5 Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT

APPENDIX 2 – Parental Complaint Form

<p>PARENTAL COMPLAINT FORM Stage 2: Formal Written Complaints</p>	
<p>When we receive a complaint, we aim to acknowledge its receipt within 5 days and send a full or interim response within 15 days.</p>	
Name of parent / carer	
Pupil's Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone (day)	
Telephone (evening)	
<p>What is your concern and how has it affected your child?</p>	
<p>Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please list this below:</p>	
<p>Have you discussed this matter with a member of staff before filling in this form? If so, who did you speak to and what was the response?</p>	
<p>What would you like to happen as a result of making this complaint?</p>	
Signature:	Date:
<p>Official use only</p> <p>Initial response and acknowledgment:</p> <p>By whom:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Complaint reference number:</p> <p>Action taken:</p> <p>Date:</p>
<p>All functions of the complaints procedure must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p> <p>Please complete and return to the school office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Headteacher or relevant person as per Stage 2 of this policy for Written formal complaints</p>	

APPENDIX 3 – School Actions Complaints Pro-Forma

SCHOOL ACTIONS COMPLAINTS PRO-FORMA	
Stage 2: Formal Written Complaints	
Date complaint referred to school staff	
Date complaint referred to Headteacher	
Date complaint acknowledged by letter	
School's Complaint Procedures forwarded?	YES / NO
Target date for response	
General nature of complaint	
Date of meeting with parent	
Others present at meeting	
Statements attached?	YES / NO
Witnesses interviewed	
Date	
Pupils interviewed in the presence of	
Date	
Records of correspondence / telephone calls etc. attached?	YES / NO
Date of notification of decision to parents	
Written response attached?	YES / NO
Date complaint referred to Governing Body	
Third Party Involvement	

APPENDIX 4 – School Complaint Review Request Form

SCHOOL COMPLAINT REVIEW REQUEST FORM

Stage 2: Formal Written Complaints

Complainant Name(s)			
General nature of complaint			
Reasons for Dis-satisfaction at Stage 2			
Desired Outcome			
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please list.			
Date		Signature	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Request Received	
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All functions of the complaints procedure must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please complete and return to the school office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Headteacher or relevant person as per Stage 2 of this policy for Written formal complaints

ANNEX 1 – Matters excluded from scope of this policy

Excluded Matters	Signposting
Admissions	The process for challenging admissions decisions is set out in our admissions policy in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
Child protection matters	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
Exclusions	The process for challenging exclusions decisions is set out in the DfE's statutory guidance and information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions
National Curriculum content	Please contact the Department for Education at www.education.gov.uk/contactus
School re-organisation proposals	Where concerns are not adequately addressed by the trust, complaints can be raised direct with the Department for Education.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Staff conduct	Certain complaints about staff may need to be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Concerns about statutory assessments of special educational needs should be raised direct with the local authority.
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus . Volunteer staff who have concerns should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of the complaint