Amplify Education

Central Trust Feedback and Complaints Policy

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As part of the review process, this policy/procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Date	Page	Change	Purpose of Change
June 2026		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

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Values, Principles and Standards

- Amplify is a **bold voice for Bristol** - speaking with ambition and channelling the city's spirit into a shared journey of belief, opportunity and citizenship.
- We **build belief** in every young person, shaping a future where every voice matters, every story is heard, and every learner moves forward with confidence.
- We **expand opportunities** and nurture potential to enrich each learner's journey with a passport of inclusive, academic, creative and musical experiences.
- We **strengthen citizenship** through connecting communities, educating to build unity and pride. This is Bristol, represented.

Aims

This Feedback and Complaints Policy provides a framework and sets out procedures to be followed in relation to any concern or complaint about Amplify Education (the Trust). If your complaint relates to any individual school (the Academy) within the Trust, you should refer the School Feedback and Complaints policy.

Amplify Education aims to work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any concerns or complaints which arise. Amplify Education will always be prepared to accept feedback and implement any recommendations to improve practices across the Trust.

This policy will:

- Be easily accessible and impartial
- Ensure a full, fair and transparent investigation
- Ensure confidentiality where needed
- Provide an effective response to a complaint
- Help to improve the provision of any school within the Trust
- Promote a culture of safety, equality and protection

All parental complaints will be handled following this Complaints Policy. Where parents and carers require reasonable adjustments to be made to access the policy and process, Amplify Education will offer support with this.

Each stage of the complaints process has its own timeframe, explained in the sections below. We expect every complaint to move forward without unnecessary delay.

Amplify Education aims to deal with all complaints quickly and effectively.
Parents/carers are encouraged to raise any concerns as soon as they arise. Complaints can be raised in person, in writing or by telephone.
If exceptional circumstances mean we cannot meet the usual timeframes, Amplify Education will inform the Parent/Carer as soon as possible, explain the reason for the delay, and provide a revised timeframe.

Glossary of definitions

The following terms are used within the policy and definitions are included below to support all parents and carers understanding of terms used within education.

Term	Simple Definition
Academy	A school funded by the government
Academy Trust	An organisation that manages one or more schools.
Appendix	Extra information added at the end of a document to provide more detail.
Complainant	The person who makes a complaint.
Criteria	The standards or rules used to make a decision.
Delegate	A person given authority to act or make decisions on behalf of someone else.
Decision Maker	The person responsible for making a final decision about a complaint.
Discretion	The ability to make a decision based on judgement and the situation.
Dismissed	When a complaint is not accepted or is closed without further action.

Governors	People who help oversee how a school is run and make sure it is doing its job properly.
Investigation	Looking into a complaint by gathering facts and information.
Investigator	The person who carries out the investigation.
Matter	The issue or subject being complained about.
On the balance of probabilities	Deciding what is most likely to have happened based on the evidence.
Outcome	The final decision made about a complaint.
Parent and carer/ Parental	Any person with legal responsibility for a child.
Party / Parties	The people or groups involved in the complaint.
Representations	Information, views, or evidence given by someone about the complaint.
Resolve	To settle or sort out a complaint.
Response	The reply given to explain the decision about a complaint.
Third Party	Someone not directly involved in the complaint (for example, an external advisor).
Trustees	People responsible for overseeing the Academy Trust and making key decisions.
Upheld / Uphold	When a complaint is found to be justified or valid.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern is when someone feels worried or uncertain about something important and is looking for reassurance or clarification.

A complaint Is when someone is unhappy about something that has happened, or about something they feel should have happened but did not.

It is better for everyone that concerns and complaints are settled as early as possible. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the Complaints Procedure. The Trust and its schools take concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the CEO will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Amplify Education will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this Complaints Procedure.

Who can make a complaint?

This policy applies to complaints from:

- Parents of current pupils
- Parents of former pupils, if the complaint was first raised while the pupil was still on roll, or within three months of the pupil leaving the Trust

Information about how this policy applies to people who are not parents can be found in Appendix 5 at the end of this policy. The Trust has separate Grievance and Whistleblowing policies for concerns raised by staff.

This policy does not apply to issues that must follow separate legal procedures, such as admission appeals, exclusion reviews, special educational needs appeals, or matters that may require a child protection investigation. Please view the table in Appendix 9 or contact Amplify Education for further details about where to direct queries regarding the above.

This process is not appropriate for use related to concerns around the **content** of school or Trust approved policies. There is a clear consultation process when policies are developed and changed, and how they are approved. Where appropriate,

parents/carers and students are included in this consultation process. If you have concerns about the content of a policy, you should discuss your concerns with the Headteacher of your school first. However, if the concern relates to the implementation, impact or another aspect of a policy then the complaints process would be an entirely appropriate way of dealing with this.

Amplify Education will not usually investigate anonymous complaints unless there is a clear reason to do so. This is because it may not be possible to gather sufficient information, establish the facts, or provide an outcome to the person raising the concern.

Requests for financial compensation or damages fall outside the scope of this Complaints Policy.

Parents/carers should be aware that, for confidentiality and data protection reasons, the Trust cannot share details of any disciplinary action taken against staff or sanctions against other pupils regardless of the nature or outcome of a complaint.

In some situations, it may be necessary to do something differently from the usual Complaints Procedure. This will only happen when it is reasonable and justified, and Amplify Education will continue to meet any legal requirements. Parents/carers will be informed of any changes to the process and are invited to read the Department of Education Parent Guide to School Complaints 25/26 alongside this policy.

How to raise a concern or complaint

- A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing, by phone, or through a third party with the complainant's consent. Please see Appendix 2 for a simple flow chart to explain the process.
- Concerns or complaints about Trust staff (other than the CEO) should be sent to the CEO via the Trust main office and marked *Private and Confidential*. Please Appendix 8 for details.
- Complaints about the CEO should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees in the first instance marked *Private and Confidential*. Contact details are available on the Trust website.
- Complaints about the Chair of Trustees, an individual Trustee, or the whole Trustee board should be sent to the Clerk to the Trustees via the Trust main office, marked *Private and Confidential*.
- A template complaint form is available in Appendix 1. This form can be used if helpful, however concerns and complaints will also be considered if raised via phone, email or in person.
- Reasonable adjustments (such as alternative formats or support completing the form e.g. using an interpreter or translator) will be provided if needed. Please contact the main Trust office if further support is needed.

Timescales

Parents/carers must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame only if exceptional circumstances apply.

The timeframes for each stage of the Trust's complaints procedure are outlined below and available for quick reference in Appendix 3. We expect every complaint to move forward promptly. If exceptional circumstances cause a delay at any stage, the Trust will inform the parent/carer as soon as possible and provide a revised timeframe.

If a parent/carer or complainant needs to extend the deadline of a complaint for any reason (e.g. religious holiday, family illness or bereavement), they should submit their request for the extension in writing to the Decision Maker with a proposed revised timeframe.

If a parent/carer begins legal proceedings against Amplify Education in relation to their complaint, an appropriate member of the central senior leadership team of the Amplify Education will decide whether the complaints procedure should be paused until the legal process is complete.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the Trust wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part or not at all. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will do our best to make sure the event complained of will not happen again
- an apology
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help make sure that it will not happen again and an idea of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

Stage 1 Informal Complaint

It is to be hoped that most concerns can be expressed and resolved on an informal basis. This means that a parent/carer can talk through and solve most issues without needing a formal process. Concerns should be raised with the appropriate member of the Trust leadership team.

It is much better to do this because it saves time, reduces stress and repairs relationships faster without the discomfort or delays of strict official paperwork.

If the Stage 1 complaint concerns the CEO, the parent can choose to raise the complaint directly with the CEO if they feel that the matter is capable of resolution informally.

If the Stage 1 complaint concerns an individual Trustee, the parent should raise their concern with the Chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees who will respond in writing.

If the Stage 1 complaint concerns the Chair of Trustees or the entire Trustee board, the parent should raise their concern with the Clerk to the Trustees who will determine the best course of action which will be explained in writing.

An informal Stage 1 complaint will be acknowledged within **3 working days** of receiving the original complaint, explaining what action is being taken and likely timescales. This action may include an informal investigation and/or meeting with the parent/carer.

This means that there could be a careful and thorough examination of the situation or problem to find out the facts, the truth, or to understand how or why something has happened.

At the end of their investigation, the appropriate person investigating the complaint will provide an informal written response to the parent within **20 working days** of the date the complaint was first received.

If it is not possible to solve the issue, the next step is to make a formal complaint. This is explained further in 'Stage 2 Formal Complaint' below.

Stage 2 Formal Complaint

Formal complaints must be made to the CEO (unless they are about the CEO), via the Trust main office. This may be done in person or in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form – Appendix 1) and should include any relevant documents and preferred contact details (email, mobile phone number etc).

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within **3 working days**, including what action is being taken and the likely timescales.

If better to do so, the CEO may delegate the decision making to another senior member of staff or local governor who is new to the complaint. This person is the Decision Maker.

The Complainant will be told if this is going to happen, and who the Decision Maker is going to be.

Investigation

The subject of the complaint will be investigated appropriately which may include:

- Delegating the investigation to a senior suitable member of staff or third party who is new to the complaint. This person will be the Investigator.
- Asking for additional information from the parent, including what they think might sort out the issue
- Meeting with the parent to fully understand their concerns, agree what the investigation will look at and to help gather information.

During the investigation, the CEO (or Investigator) will:

- If necessary, interview those involved in the matter, which might include any witnesses. It might also include interviewing whoever is being complained about. They are allowed to bring someone with them to the interview to support them if they wish (for example, a colleague or trade union representative) but they can't bring a legal adviser (for example, a lawyer).
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation

At the end of their investigation, the CEO (or alternative Decision Maker) will give the complainant a formal written response **within 20 working days** of the date of receipt of the complaint. Where possible, the CEO (or alternative Decision Maker) will meet with the complainant in person to explain the response and discuss any potential recommendations. If the CEO (or alternative Decision Maker) is not able to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will set out any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to solve the complaint.

The CEO (or alternative Decision Maker) will advise the complainant of how to take their complaint further should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2.

If the complaint is about the CEO, it should be put in writing to the Chair of Trustees who will determine the best way forward.

Stage 3 Panel Hearing

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, they can ask for a Stage 3 Complaint Panel Hearing. This Panel will only look at the parts of the complaint the parent/carer still disagrees with and does not have to consider any new issues that were not raised earlier.

How to request a Panel Hearing

A request for a Panel Hearing must be put in writing to the Chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees and will only be considered if everything at Stage 2 has been completed.
The written request should be made within **15 working days** from receipt of the Stage 2 decision (requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply) and include:

- a copy of any relevant documents and the parent/carer's contact details (address, email and mobile number);
- details of what about the complaint and the decision the parent/carer doesn't agree with and what they want the outcome to be;

If help with the request is required, for example because of a disability, please inform the Clerk to the Trustees who will be happy to make appropriate arrangements.

The Clerk to the Trustees will acknowledge the request for a Panel Hearing in writing within **3 working days** of receipt.

Every effort will be made to arrange for the Panel Hearing to take place within **30 working days** of receipt of the request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will send a new date to the parent/carer.

If the parent/carer does not accept any of the three dates offered, and does not have a good reason, the Clerk will choose a date for the meeting.

The meeting will go ahead even if the parent/carer does not attend. The panel will make its decision using the written information provided by both sides.

A Stage 3 panel hearing can take place in person or virtually.

Planning the Panel Hearing

10 working days before the date of the Panel Hearing: The Chair of the Panel Hearing will do their best to write to all involved (through the Clerk to the Trustees) with the date, time and place of the Panel Hearing.

7 working days before the Panel Hearing: Copies of any additional documents that the Parent wishes the Complaint Panel to consider should be sent to the Chair of the Panel Hearing via the Clerk.

3 working days prior to the Panel Hearing: The Chair of the Panel Hearing will do their best to send a copy of the pack of documents to be considered by the Complaint Panel via the Clerk to everyone involved.

The pack of documents will include all records held in the complaint file following Stage 1 and / or 2, as well as all correspondence and documents received from the parent/carer following the completion of the complaint at Stage 2.

The parent/carer may be accompanied at the Panel Hearing, for example by a relative , friend or other appropriate individual to offer support where needed. This individual must be over 18 years old. The Panel Hearing is an internal process, not legal proceedings, and legal representation is unnecessary.
If the parent/carer would like to be accompanied by a relative or friend who is legally qualified, the parent/carer must tell the Chair of Trustees this when they first ask for a Panel Hearing.

The parent/carer should know that the Complaint Panel will speak to that person directly before the Panel Hearing. They will not be allowed to speak instead of a parent/carer, or to the Panel unless the Chair of the Complaint Panel agrees for them to.

A person will be appointed to take notes of the Panel Hearing.

Who is on the Complaint Panel?

The Complaint Panel will be made up of at least three people who do not already know about the issues in the complaint, At least one person will be independent of the management and running of Amplify Education. This means they will not be a Member, Trustee, or an employee of the Trust either at Trust level or at any of its schools). They may be a Local Governor at an Amplify Education school.

The parent/carer can ask the Chair of the Panel Hearing to let them know who has been asked to sit on the Complaint Panel before the Panel Hearing. Fair consideration will be given to any reasonable objection to a particular member of the panel.

The Complaint Panel members will appoint one of themselves to be the Chair of the Complaint Panel Hearing for the proceedings.

Role of the Complaint Panel

The Complaint Panel is there to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made by considering:

- the documents provided by both parties; and •
  any representations made by the parties

and to review the decision reached at Stage 2 and to consider, on a balance of probabilities, as to whether to uphold each complaint.

On a balance of probabilities means that a claim is more likely to be true than not. There has to be proof that there is over a 50% chance that something happened.

The Panel Hearing

If a parent/carer chooses not to attend the Panel Hearing, the hearing will still go ahead unless they confirm beforehand that they are satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 complaint.

If a parent/carer is not present, the Panel will review the complaint using the information available and share its findings in the usual way.

The Panel will usually hear representations from the Stage 2 Decision Maker and the parent/carer(s). If appropriate, the Stage 2 Investigating Officer may also be invited to make representations.

During the Panel Hearing, the parties will be able to ask questions and make comments in an appropriate manner. The Panel Hearing is not a legal process, and the Complaint Panel do not have to hear oral evidence from witnesses. They may decide to, and/or they may take written statements into account.

During the Panel Hearing, everyone is expected to behave respectfully and politely. If someone behaves in a way that disrupts the meeting, the Chair may pause or end the hearing after giving a warning.

If anyone is unhappy with how the hearing is being run, they should raise their concern as soon as possible. Their concern will be recorded.

The Chair may pause the hearing if needed. This could be to support someone's wellbeing, to gather or consider more information, or to allow time for legal advice to be asked for about a specific issue.

The Panel Hearing is a private meeting. Information discussed during the hearing must not be shared with the press, media or on social media.

When the Chair is satisfied that the Complaint Panel has considered all the information and listened to everyone involved, the hearing will finish.

Decision

The Complaint Panel will make a decision about each complaint on the balance of probabilities and may make recommendations.

The Complaint Panel cannot make any financial award, or insist on actions on the school's staff, pupils or other parent/carers.

The notes of the Panel Hearing, together with the Complaint Panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parent/carer and, where relevant, the person complained about, within **5 working days** of the Panel Hearing. At this time, the Complaint Panel's findings and any recommendations will also be provided in writing to the Decision Maker for the Stage 2 complaint as well as the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees of Amplify Education.

The Complaint Panel's findings and any recommendations will also be made available for inspection by the Trust Board and the CEO.

The decision of the Panel is final. It will not be possible to take the complaint any further within the Academy Trust. The Trust's complaints procedure ends when Stage 3 finishes.

If a very similar complaint is made by a new complainant after the Stage 3 process has finished, the Trust will inform the new complainant that the matter is closed.

Next steps

If the person who made the complaint believes that Amplify Education did not follow its Complaints Procedure, or did not act fairly or lawfully, they can contact the Department for Education (DfE) after they have completed Stage 3 of the complaints process.

The DfE's contact details are as follows:

Online: Via the online DfE guidance **How DfE handles complaints about academies (2020)**

By post:
Department for Education
School complaints compliance unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

The DfE cannot overturn the decision about a complaint. The DfE's role is to make sure the complaint is handled properly, using the rules and procedures that the Trust must follow.

Withdrawal of a complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing to the CEO or Chair of Trustees.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been prepared to meet the Trust's responsibilities under all the relevant guidelines.

Amplify Education's Head of Operations is responsible for keeping the policy up to date, making sure it follows the law and checking that it is being used properly. They will also review it at least once a year or as required.

Reporting and Use of Information

- The Head of Operations carries out a formal annual review of complaints, puts any recommendations in place, looks for any patterns in complaints, and suggests further improvements to policies and procedures. This will include

getting feedback from everyone involved to improve the processes of Amplify Education.

- The policy is available on the Trust's website, in hard copy on request, and can be seen at the main Trust office during the school day. It can also be provided in large print or other accessible formats, and reasonable adjustments will be made to help parent/carers access or follow the procedure.
- Information about the number of formal complaints from the previous school year is available to current and prospective parent/carers, and to Ofsted or the Secretary of State, upon written request.
- If the Trust has made reasonable efforts to offer suitable dates for complaint meetings and the parent/carers cannot or will not attend, the Trust may:
  - hold the meeting without the parent/carers present
  - make a decision in order to bring the complaint to a conclusion
- All records created under this policy are managed according to the Amplify Education's Records and Retention policy.
- Amplify Education keeps a written record of all formal complaints, including:
  - whether the complaint was resolved at Stage 2 or Stage 3
  - what action the Trust took in response, even if the complaint was not upheld
- Some information collected through this policy will include personal data. The Amplify Education's privacy notices explain how personal data is used, and the Amplify Education Data Protection Policy sets out the Trust's overall approach to data protection. Staff must follow all data protection policies when handling personal information linked to complaints.
- All correspondence and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential, unless the Secretary of State requests access, or disclosure is required for an inspection or by another legal authority or court order.

Recording meetings

- The Trust or the parent/carers may request to be allowed to record meetings if the Trust decides it is a reasonable adjustment or there is a fair reason to do so. Recording will only happen if all parties confirm they have no objections. Any recording must not be shared under any circumstances, including on social media or with the press.
- Except in exceptional circumstances, the Department for Education supports the Trust in refusing to accept covert recordings as evidence.

Appendix 1 Complaint form

(Please continue on additional pages if necessary)

Complaint Form			
Name:			
Address:		**Mobile:**	**E mail:**
Who (within the school) have you already raised the complaint with? **(Please include any relevant dates)**			
What is the reason for your complaint? **(Please include as much information as possible about what specifically you are unhappy about and why)**			
What would you like to happen as a result of your complaint?			
List of relevant documents enclosed with the complaint form			

Declaration

The information included in this complaint form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I agree to cooperate fully with the complaints procedures as well as other related policies (i.e. Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and Home School Communications Policy).

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 2 Complaints Process Flow Chart

A parent/carer-friendly overview of the Trust complaints process and timescales.

Raise your concern

Speak to someone at the Trust central team. You can do this in person, by phone or by email.

v

Stage 1: Informal resolution

The Trust central team will talk to you about your concern and try to resolve it within 20 working days.

v

If you are still not happy

Complete the formal complaint form or email the Trust central team to explain your concerns and

say you would like the matter to be dealt with formally. v

Stage 2: Formal investigation

An investigating officer will be appointed. They will meet with you to discuss your concerns.

You will receive a written response within 20 working days. v

If you are still not happy

Tell the Trust central team within 15 working days that you would like to move to a Stage 3 panel hearing.

v

Stage 3: Panel hearing

The Trust central team will arrange a panel hearing within 30 working days.

The panel will consist of 3 people who have not previously been involved in the complaint.

You will be invited to attend the meeting to discuss your ongoing concerns. v

Panel outcome

The panel will write to you within 5 working days of the meeting with its response.

Appendix 3 Complaint Stages and Timescales

Stage	What happens	Timescale
Concern raised	Raise your concern with a member of staff at the Trust central team in person, by phone or by email.	As soon as possible
Stage 1	The Trust central team discusses the concern and tries to resolve it informally.	Within 20 working days
Stage 2	A formal complaint is made. An investigating officer is appointed, meets with you and provides a written response.	Written response within 20 working days
Stage 3	If still unhappy, request a panel hearing. The school arranges a panel of 3 people not previously involved.	Request within 15 working days. Hearing within 30 working days
Outcome	The panel writes to you with its response.	Within 5 working days of the meeting

Appendix 4 Roles and Responsibilities

Complainants

Parents/carers and complainants can help the process run smoothly by:

- explaining their complaint clearly and as early as possible
- cooperating with the school to find a solution
- responding promptly to requests for information or meetings
- asking for support if needed
- treating everyone involved with respect
- keeping the complaint confidential and avoiding sharing the details with others or posting details on social media

Investigator

The Investigator is responsible for establishing the facts by:

- interviewing the complainant, staff, and others involved
- reviewing records and relevant information
- analysing the evidence

- clarifying with the complainant what outcome they are seeking

They should:

- identify all parts of the complaint
- review all documentation
- conduct fair and open-minded interviews
- keep accurate notes
- store all documents securely
- meet required timescales
- prepare a clear report for the Decision Maker, Headteacher or Complaints Panel

The Decision Maker or Panel will then decide whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and inform the complainant.

Complaints Co-ordinator

The Complaints Co-ordinator:

- keeps the complainant updated throughout the process
- liaises with staff, the Headteacher, Governors, Trustees, or Clerk
- manages issues around confidentiality, redaction, and additional support needs
- maintains accurate records

Clerk to the Trustees

The Clerk:

- acts as the main contact for the complainant and the Panel
- ensures everyone understands their legal rights and responsibilities
- arranges the meeting (date, time, venue) and ensures accessibility
- circulates relevant documents in advance
- records and circulates minutes
- communicates the Panel's decision to all parties

Complaint Panel Chair

The Panel Chair ensures that:

- both parties provide any additional information by the agreed deadline
- the meeting is fair, respectful, and non-adversarial
- parents/carers feel comfortable speaking
- the Panel's role is clearly explained
- all written material is shared appropriately and lawfully
- both sides can present their case and ask questions
- the issues and facts are properly considered

- the Panel remains impartial and independent
- the meeting is accurately minuted

Complaint Panel Members

Panel members must ensure that:

- the meeting is independent and impartial
- no one on the Panel has been involved in the complaint previously
- the aim is to resolve the complaint or, where that is not possible, establish the facts and make recommendations
- parents/carers are supported, recognising that they may feel anxious or emotional
- children or young people are treated sensitively if present, and their welfare is prioritised

The panel must make sure that, if a child or young person is present, they feel comfortable and not intimidated during the meeting. Their views should be listened to and given the same weight as an adult. If the parent/carer is the complainant, they can say which parts of the meeting they feel the child or young person should attend. However, the panel may decide that attendance at certain parts is not appropriate if it is not in the child or young person's best interests.

Appendix 5 Complaints Procedure for Individuals Who Are Not Parents/Carers

Amplify Education welcomes concerns from anyone who is not a parent/carer. Concerns should be raised in writing to the CEO or Chair of Trustees, explaining the issue and the outcome sought. These concerns will be investigated and responded to under Stages 1 and 2 of this procedure.

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 2 response, they may request a review by writing to the Clerk to the Trustees. A Trustee will carry out the review and provide a written decision.

A review request must be made in writing, **within 15 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 decision, and should include:

- relevant documents and full contact details
- the specific points of dissatisfaction and the desired outcome
- a list of documents held by the school that the Complainant wishes the Trusteeto consider **Role of the Trustee**

The Trustee will:

- consider the documents provided
- review the Stage 2 decision
- decide, on the balance of probabilities, whether each part of the complaint should be upheld

They will issue written findings and any recommendations within **20 working days** of receiving the review request. These findings will also be available for inspection at the main Trust office by the CEO. The Trustee's decision is final, and this concludes the Trust's complaints procedure for non-parents/carers.

If a duplicate complaint is submitted after the review is complete, the Trust will inform the Complainant that the matter is closed.

The Trust may adapt this procedure where appropriate and may first explore informal resolution. If informal resolution is not possible, the complaint will be investigated and decided, with the option to request a review of that decision.

Complainants who remain dissatisfied after a Trustee review may contact the Department for Education, which may consider the matter on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Contact details are provided in Appendix 8 of the Trust's Complaints Policy.

Appendix 6 Serial and Persistent and Unreasonable Complaints

Amplify Education takes serial or persistent complaints seriously, as they place pressure on resources and delay proper investigation.

When a matter is closed

- Once Amplify Education has completed the complaints procedure, the complainant will be informed that the matter is closed.
- Further contact about the same issue may be treated as serial or persistent. In these cases, Amplify Education will act in line with statutory and legal guidelines and in exceptional circumstances the school may choose not to respond.
- A complaint will not be classed as serial until all stages of the procedure have been completed.
- A complainant has the right to seek support or representation from their local MP. Contacting an MP, or asking an MP to raise concerns on their behalf, will not in itself result in the complainant being classed as "serial or persistent".

Frivolous or vexatious complaints

A complaint may be considered frivolous or vexatious if it involves:

- obsessive, persistent, or harassing behaviour
- pursuing complaints with no merit or demanding unrealistic outcomes
- pursuing a valid complaint in an unreasonable way
- attempts to cause disruption or annoyance
- demands with no serious purpose or value

Complainants are asked to limit communication while a complaint is being considered, as repeated messages can delay progress.

Managing excessive contact

If a complainant contacts the Trust excessively or disruptively, the Trust may:

- set specific communication methods
- provide a single point of contact
- limit the number of communications

These arrangements are usually reviewed after three months.

The Trust may stop responding when:

- all reasonable steps have been taken to address concerns
- the Trust's position and options have been clearly explained to the complainant in writing
- the complainant continues to repeat the same points

This is more likely where communications are abusive, aggressive, include personal insults or threats, or appear intended to cause disruption.

Aggression, violence, and access to the site

This policy should be read in conjunction with other appropriate policies including the Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and the Home School Communications Policy.

Appendix 7 Complaint Campaigns

Where the Trust receives multiple complaints from different complainants relating to substantially the same issue, including jointly signed letters, template correspondence or coordinated campaigns, the Trust may determine that a single investigation and response is appropriate.

The Trust may issue a common response to all complainants whilst ensuring that any individual circumstances material to the complaint are considered. The Trust may also decide to publish this response on the Trust's website.

Appendix 8 Contact Details

Amplify Education (main office)	Trust House, Teyfant Road, Bristol, BS13 0RF Tel: 0117 462 0499
General enquiries	Info@ampedu.co.uk
Chair of Trustees	Chairoftrustees@ampedu.co.uk

Appendix 9 Alternative Procedures

Issue / Concern	Applicable Procedure	Who Oversees the Process	How to Raise / Direct Queries
School Admissions	Statutory Admissions Appeals Procedure	Independent Admissions Appeal Panel (organised by the School/Trust or Local Authority, as applicable)	Contact the School Admissions Team for information on submitting an appeal
Fixed-Term or Permanent Exclusion	Statutory Exclusion and Review Process	Governing Board / Trust Board and Independent Review Panel	Contact the School Headteacher or Governance Professional for exclusion review guidance
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	SEND statutory processes, including EHCP assessment and appeal routes	Local Authority and SEND Tribunal (SENDIST)	Contact the School SENCO in the first instance or the Local Authority SEND Team
Child Protection / Safeguarding Concerns	Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures (KCSIE-aligned)	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Children's Social Care / Police, where required	Contact the School Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
Criminal or Police Matters	Criminal justice and safeguarding procedures	Police and relevant statutory agencies	Contact the School or emergency services as appropriate
Whistleblowing Allegations	Whistleblowing Policy	Trust Board or external prescribed body	Follow the Trust Whistleblowing Policy