

**SNMAT
COMPLAINTS
POLICY**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Everyone involved in the life of our school / academy works hard to try and get things right for the pupils. However, from time to time concerns and complaints do arise and schools are required to have a policy and procedures in place under the terms of the Education (Independent School Standards, England) Regulations 2010 Part7

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/pdfs/ukxi_20101997_en.pdf to deal with these matters and to publish that policy. This policy sets out the procedures that the school / academy will follow in such cases.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

2.1 This policy covers all concerns or complaints against the school / academy by people who do not have an alternative statutory avenue. Therefore, it may be used by parents, carers or members of the wider public e.g. local residents or stakeholders or pupils who wish to raise a concern or complaint with the school.

2.2 There are some areas e.g. safeguarding, admissions, exclusions and SEN assessments where concerns or complaints will need to be handled in a different way and these are detailed in the relevant policies.

2.3 Staff of the school / academy cannot use this policy to raise a concern or complaint but have alternative staffing procedures. Refer to other policies: SNMAT Confidential Reporting and Whistleblowing and NCC policies for Grievance and Disciplinary procedures.

2.4 If at any stage in the procedure it becomes apparent that the complaint falls outside of this general concerns and complaints policy, the person will be informed.

3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 Our school / academy aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any concern. We aim to give careful consideration to concerns or complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We try and solve any concern through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child / young person above all other issues. We try to provide sufficient opportunity for any concern to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3.2 During any investigations that need to take place the person will be kept informed of progress and, at the end of that process, the outcome will be communicated except where this is confidential e.g. in the case of a staff disciplinary process. The length of time that it takes to deal with a concern or complaint will vary with the gravity and complexity of the issues and the urgency with which it needs to be settled. All references to working days refer to days on which the school is open to pupils and for staff training days. Where the timescales in this procedure cannot be adhered to, the person will be kept informed as to why this is the case, and given a revised timeline for dealing with the complaint.

3.3 Anonymous concerns or complaints will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances. To enable proper investigations, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible.

3.4 If a complainant believes that the academy has failed to comply with its own complaints procedure or that the academy's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements the complainant may inform the Multi Academy Trust.

3.5 If anyone faces communication challenges e.g. hearing difficulties, disability, language barrier or other cross-cultural issues we will always look at ways to overcome these challenges. Likewise, if you do not understand any part of this policy please do not hesitate to raise your questions at the time of registering your concern or complaint.

4.0 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

We hope that our concerns and complaints procedure is easy to follow for all users. It is intended that we deal with any information as follows: -

- the initial response should be timely and courteous and reassure you that you are being taken seriously
- concerns and complaints should be responded to in an objective and unbiased manner
- responses should seek to address all the points at issue
- information related to the concerns and complaints procedure should be treated confidentially
- our approach to handling concerns and complaints will show a commitment to resolving complaints by taking action
- where appropriate the outcomes on concerns and complaints should provide information to the school's senior leadership team so that things can be improved

5.0 RESOLVING CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

5.1 At each stage in the procedure we will want to consider the ways in which a concern or complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the concern or complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following: -

- an apology
- an explanation
- an admission that a situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint

5.2 Those raising concerns or complaints are encouraged to state what action they feel might resolve the problem at any stage. It is hoped that this will identify areas of agreement between the parties and clarify any misunderstandings that may have occurred in order to create a positive climate to resolve any outstanding issues. An admission that the school could have handled the situation better is not the same as an admission of negligence.

6.0 STAGE ONE DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS INFORMALLY

6.1 If a parent or carer is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's tutor or class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. Teachers want children to be happy at school and make good progress so they need to know if there is a problem. This means they can do something before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. The class teacher or tutor will either take action, or work with appropriate colleagues to resolve the concern. Concerns and complaints will be acknowledged quickly, although it may not be possible to provide a full answer immediately. If a member of staff receives a concern or complaint they cannot resolve straight away, they should make a clear note of the date, name, contact details and brief details of the concern/complaint. All complaints should be made as soon as possible after the incident arises and must be made within three months.

6.2 If the class teacher or Tutor is the subject of your concern please contact another member of staff e.g. a Head of House, Head of Year or key-stage co-ordinator who will clarify the nature of the issues and who is involved. They will be responsible for discussing the complaint and taking action.

6.3 If as a parent or carer or pupil you feel that the initial contact and discussions made with a member of staff have not resolved your concern, or that your concern is of a serious nature, you should make an appointment to discuss it with a senior member of staff /Headteacher. S/he will ensure your concern is taken seriously and arrange for it to be investigated thoroughly. Most concerns are normally resolved at this stage.

6.4 If you feel that your concern has not been dealt with to your satisfaction you may contact our Complaints Governor or Chair of Governors. Please complete Annex A at the back of this policy in order that we can deal with your concern most efficiently. Any correspondence to the Complaints Governor or Chair of Governors must be marked 'confidential' and addressed to them at the school office. The governor in question will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school and yourself and the complaint will be fully investigated. If you remain unhappy with the outcome you can make a formal complaint, as outlined in the next section.

6.5 If your concern or complaint is about the Headteacher, you should first make an informal approach to the Governing Body's Complaints Governor or Chair of Governors.

6.6 Only if all attempts to resolve your concerns informally (as outlined in this section) fail to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made.

7.0 STAGE TWO DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS FORMALLY

7.1 A formal complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, how the school has handled it so far and how they would like the situation resolved. The parent or carer should complete Annex B at the end of this policy and send it to the school, marked Private and Confidential, to the Chair of Governors. (Where a complaint is made against the Chair of Governors, Form B should be addressed to the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi Academy Trust, Jubilee House, Southwell, Nottinghamshire NG25 0JH)

7.2 A complaints panel (comprising of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school) will consider all written complaints within fifteen working days of receipt. The panel will arrange a meeting so the nature of the complaint can be understood, and the complainant(s) have an opportunity to explain the complaint in more detail. The complainant may, if they wish, bring a supporter with them. The school will give the complainant at least 7 working days' notice of the meeting. The meeting will be minuted.

7.3 The clerk will set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and the venue and proceedings are accessible. All written materials will be collated and sent to all parties at least 7 working days in advance of the hearing. A copy of the procedure at the meeting will also be sent to all parties. All parties will be welcomed to the hearing and the proceedings recorded formally.

7.4 At the meeting the complaints panel will consider the evidence collected and witness statements/or hear witnesses as appropriate. The aim of the hearing, which is held in private, and is independent and impartial, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.

7.5 The chair of the panel will explain the remit of the panel to the parties and give each party the opportunity to put their case without undue interruption. There will be a focus on clarifying the actions the complainant feels would resolve the complaint. The panel members will be reminded that they

Updated & agreed by SNMAT Standards Committee – March 2018

should be open minded, act independently and no member of the panel should have a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure.

The chair will ensure that all issues are addressed and key findings of fact are made. The committee may:

- 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 recur.

Parents/carers should be put at ease and the chair will ensure that each party treats the other with respect and courtesy. Each side will be given the opportunity to ask questions and state their case. Written material is seen by all parties in advance of the meeting.

7.6 After listening to all parties and all the evidence, the complaints panel will consider their decision and inform the parent or carer about the outcome in writing. It is recognised that on occasions the complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.

7.7. The suite of model documents to be used to when dealing with a complaint, are attached in Annex C.

7.8 If a complaint concerns the whole Local Governing Body of the school, an independent complaints panel may be drawn from governors of other schools who have no connection with the complaint. The complaints form should be returned to the Multi Academy Trust at Jubilee House, Westgate, Southwell, Nottinghamshire NG25 0JH.

7.9 This procedure should limit the number of complaints that become protracted. However, there will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of the Local Governing Body is able, under this policy, to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is closed.

7.10 If any parent or carer is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then they are entitled to appeal to the Academies Group - Central Division, Education Funding Agency, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH, email academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk

8.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

8.1 Staff confidence in handling complaints depends on their having clear information about procedures and in them being encouraged to use good interpersonal skills when dealing with people who are upset or angry. We will try to ensure staff have clear information about which staff have which responsibilities so that complainants do not get passed from one person to another.

8.2 The local governing body will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make changes where necessary. Formal complaints received by the school will be logged and the log will be examined by governors. The resolution of the complaint will be recorded. The Head Teacher will report any formal complaints in the Headteacher's Report to Governors and to the Multi Academy Trust Board of Directors.

8.3 Governors will consider any local or national decisions that affect the school's complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy.

8.4 As well as addressing an individual's complaint, the process of listening to and resolving complaints will contribute to academy improvement. When individual complaints are heard, the local governing body may identify underlying issues that need to be addressed. The monitoring and review of complaints by the academy and the local governing body will be a useful tool in evaluating the academy's performance.

9.0 ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Whilst the academy recognises that the process of raising a concern or complaint can be very stressful, the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi Academy Trust will not tolerate aggressive, violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour towards anyone on the academy site. Parents and members of the public are required to behave in a polite and courteous manner. Academy staff are expected to behave in a courteous and professional manner when dealing with parents and member of the public at all times.

10.0 SERIOUS AND PERSISTANT COMPLAINTS

On very rare occasions, complaints are made that are vexatious, in that an individual persists unreasonably with his/her complaints, or makes complaints in order to make difficulties for the school rather than genuinely to resolve a concern. This may involve making serial complaints about different matters, or continuing to raise the same or similar matters repeatedly. The frequency of contact with the school in such situations may hinder the consideration of the complaint and impede the ability of the Headteacher and school to meet the needs of all pupils equitably.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It is important for schools to recognise when they have done everything they can in response to a complaint.

If a complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chair of Governors can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

If the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school may choose not to respond. However, schools must be careful that they do not mark a complaint as 'serial' before the complainant has completed the procedure.

11.0 UNREASONABLE COMPLAINTS (model policy)

The (insert name of Academy) is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will act to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The (insert name of Academy) defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints.'*

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint: -

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- refuses to cooperate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
- seeks an unrealistic outcome;
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically: -

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact (insert name of Academy) causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after six months.

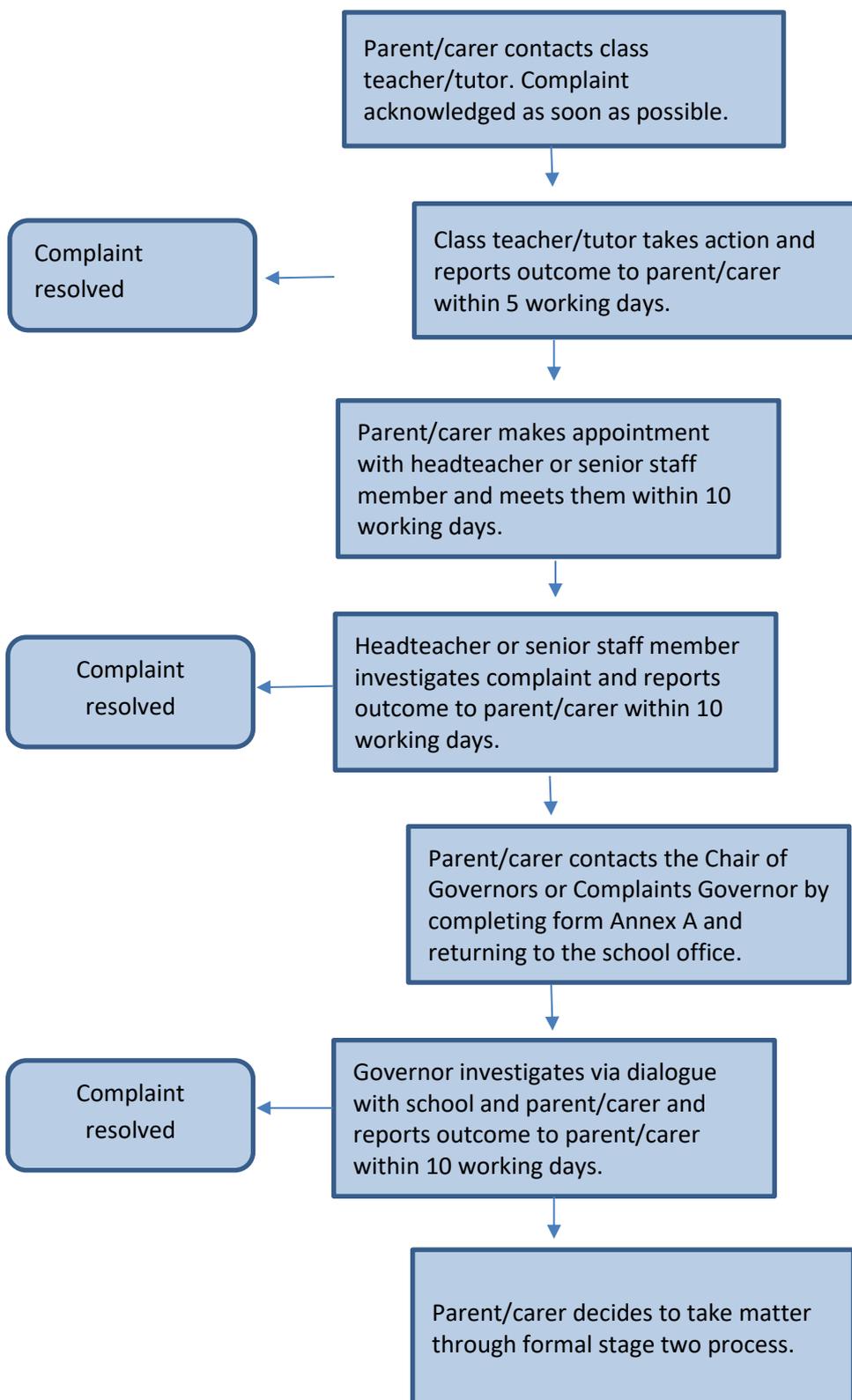
In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from (insert name of Academy).

12.0 PUBLICISING THE PROCEDURE

There is a legal requirement for the complaints procedure to be publicised. Each academy will include this information on the academy website. A copy will also be included in the policy file held in the academy office.

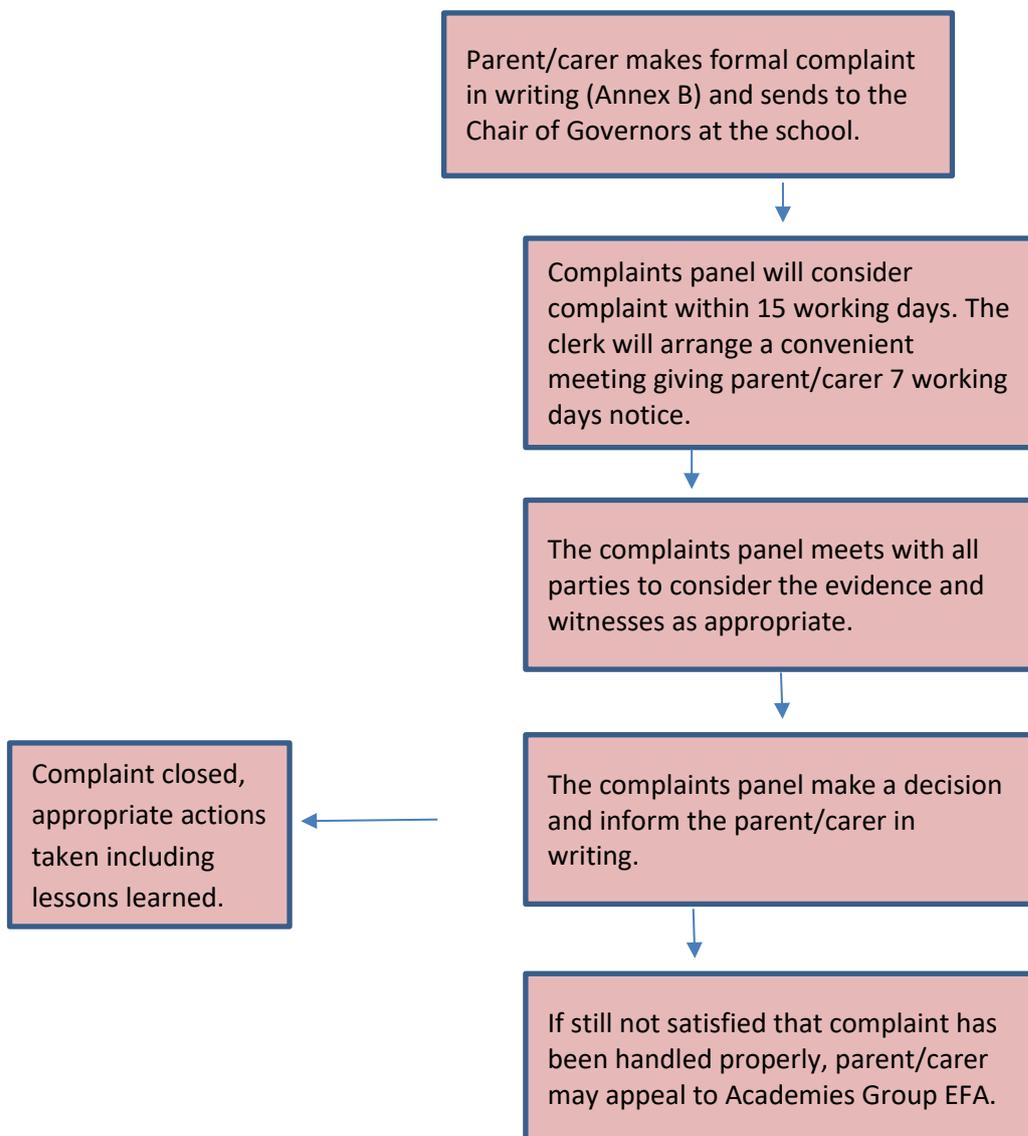
Complaints flow diagram – **STAGE ONE DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS INFORMALLY**

If, due to investigations taking place the timescales noted in the diagrams below are unable to be met, the complainant will be informed.



Complaints flow diagram – STAGE TWO DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS FORMALLY

If, due to investigations taking place the timescales noted in the diagrams below are unable to be met, the complainant will be informed.



Annex A

Please complete and return to the complaints governor(Academy),(Address) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Name:

Student's name:

Your relationship to the student:

Address:

Telephone number:

Detail of concern (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

Details of action you have already taken to try and resolve your concern. Who did you speak to and what was the response? What actions do you feel might resolve the concern at this stage? Are you attaching paperwork? If so please give details:

Signature:

Date:

For academy use only

Date acknowledgement letter sent:

By whom:

Concern referred to:

Date:

Annex B

Academy Name:

Please complete and return to the complaints governor(Academy),
.....(Address) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Name:

Student's name:

Your relationship to the student:

Address:

Telephone number:

Date and Details of your original concern:

Detail of complaint:

Details of discussions with the complaints governor and the reasons why you do not feel your concern has been satisfied:

What actions do you feel might resolve the complaint at this stage:

Are you attaching paperwork or additional paperwork to that already provided? If so please give details:

Signature:

Date:

_____ For academy
use only

Date acknowledgement letter sent:

By whom:

Concern referred to:

Date:

Annex C

Model Documents for complaints process:

Document 1 : Academy Complaints Recording Form

Document 2 : Model letter of acknowledgement to complainant

Document 3 : Model complaint closure letter – stage 1

Document 4 : Model letter inviting complainant to panel meeting

Document 5 : Model letter to complainant enclosing information for panel meeting

Document 6 : Model letter to panel members enclosing information for panel meeting

Document 7 : Meeting Agenda

Document 8 : Checklist for panel members regarding the hearing

Document 9 : Minutes of meeting (based on agenda)

Document 10 : Formalised minutes of meeting

Document 11 : Model letter to complainant giving findings of the panel

Document 12 : Model complaint closure letter – stage 2



Insert school logo

Academy Complaints Recording Form

Complaints / Feedback form

Personal Details:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

If applicable, name of child(ren) and year at school:

Your relationship to the school, e.g. parent, carer, neighbour, member of the public, student:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?

Who did you speak to, when and what was the response?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signature

Date

Official Use:

Date of acknowledgment

By whom

Complaint referred to

Date



Model letter of acknowledgement to complainant

Private and Confidential

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To complainant/s

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*

*

Dear (Complainant/s)

Thank you for your letter dated (date on letter). Your complaint will be investigated by (name of staff member/headteacher/investigating governor). They will contact you within (number of days as published in complaints policy and procedure documentation) to arrange to meet with you.

At this meeting (name of staff member/headteacher/investigating governor) will wish to clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved. They will also clarify what you feel would put things right.

I enclose a copy of the school's agreed complaints policy and procedure so you are clear about what will happen and the timelines that have been agreed by the governing body.

Yours sincerely



Model complaint closure letter– stage 1

MODEL CLOSURE LETTER FOR FORMAL STAGE 1 – HEAD TEACHER

Dear Mr and Mrs X,

FORMAL STAGE 1 COMPLAINT ABOUT Y AND ACADEMY Z

Thank you for your letter dated....

From your letter(s) it is clear that you are still unhappy with the situation. As a result I have decided to have the matter investigated as part of formal stage one of the school's complaints procedure.

You complain that :

summary of complaint to be stated. State each point separately.

I have completed my investigation and can offer the following response(s) on each of the points you have raised.

1. Concerning your complaint that
2. Concerning your complaint that

It is important that you are clear about what action the school has taken at each stage of the process so far:

Informal stage

State what action was taken in response and the outcome of this.

Formal stage one

State what investigative action was taken in response and the outcome of this, including any remedial action to be taken if complaint is upheld.

I hope this response answers your concerns. Please let me know if you wish me to clarify any points.

In the meantime, if you are still not satisfied with my reply, there is a further stage of the complaints procedure that you can follow. This formal stage two is a review by a panel of governors who will look at the way in which your complaint has been dealt with. The panel will not, however, rehear the whole case.

To go to the next formal stage two, you should write to the chair of governors within ten days of the receipt of this letter, giving your reasons why you wish to take your complaint further. If you are still not satisfied with the results of the formal stage two panel of governors, you can complain to the the Academies Group - Central Division, Education Funding Agency, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH, email academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk who will consider how your complaint has been handled.

Yours sincerely,



Model letter inviting complainant to panel meeting

Private and Confidential

To complainant

*

*

*

*

Dear complainant

Re: Complaints panel meeting – Day, Month, Date, year, time, and venue

I write to invite you to attend a meeting of the complaints panel of (school) Governing Body to be held on day, month, date, year, time, venue (usually school). The panel will consider your complaint and the investigation carried out in order to resolve it.

If you wish to make a written submission to the panel I should be grateful if you would send it to (name, address or email address), by day, month, date, year, marked for the attention of (complaints co-ordinator), who will arrange for copies to be distributed to members of the panel, the headteacher and the governor (s), who carried out the initial investigation into your complaint. The members of the panel will be:

*

*

*

If you wish to bring any witnesses to the meeting, please inform the undersigned by (day, month, date, and year.) If you are unable to attend this meeting, would you please let me know so that the panel can decide whether to go ahead with the meeting in your absence, or to postpone the meeting.

Yours sincerely



Model letter to complainant enclosing information for panel meeting

Private and Confidential

Complainant's name and address

Dear complainant

Re: Complaints panel meeting – day, month, date, year, time, venue (usually school)

Please find enclosed information received from (investigating governor) and (headteacher) to be presented by both parties at the complaints panel hearing on day, month, date, year.

I also enclose a copy of the papers submitted by you as evidence to support your complaint.

I understand that you will be bringing the following witness/s:

*

*

Copies of all these papers have been sent to all panel members, (investigating governor(s) and (headteacher). They have also been sent to (clerk to the panel).

The clerk to the panel will greet you before the meeting and outline the procedure to be followed.

Yours sincerely



Model letter to panel members enclosing information for panel meeting

Private and Confidential

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To all panel members

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Dear Colleagues

Re: Complaints panel meeting – Day, Month, Date, Year, time, venue (usually school)

Please find enclosed information received from (complainant), (investigating governor) and (headteacher) to be presented by all parties at the complaints panel hearing on Day, Month, Date, Year.

I understand from (complainant) that s/he will be bringing the following witnesses:

*

*

Copies of these papers have also been sent to (complainant), (investigating governor) and (headteacher). They have also been sent to (clerk to the panel).

The clerk will be available prior to the start of the meeting to greet the complainant/s and explain the procedure to be followed. The clerk will also be able to answer any procedural questions from the panel.

Yours sincerely

MEETING AGENDA



Meeting title:

Date and time:

Location:

1.	Chair welcomes and makes introductions to all present
2.	Apologies for absence
3.	Declaration of any interest or prior involvement in the matter by panel members
4.	Reminder of confidentiality and expectations of behaviour **during the meeting it may be necessary to disclose to the panel, information regarding other children. At this point the complainant may be asked to leave the meeting.
5.	Invitation to the complainant to give details of their case and call any witnesses. (Witnesses join the meeting at the appropriate time).
6.	School questions complainant
7.	Panel/and or clerk questions complainant
8.	School questions complainants' witnesses
9.	Panel questions complainants' witnesses (Witnesses leave the meeting after this point)
10.	School to make any response to the complainants' case.** complainant leaves the meeting to allow disclosure of information.

11.	Complainant to question the school
12.	Panel and/or clerk to question the school
13.	Complainant questions the schools' witnesses
14.	Panel questions the schools' witnesses
15.	Invitation to the complainant to sum up his/her case if so desired
16.	Invitation to the school to sum up its' case if so desired
17.	All parties to leave the meeting including the clerk unless he/she requested to remain by the panel such decision to be noted and minuted.
18.	Panel deliberations and decision
19.	Parties remaining to be invited to re-join the meeting and decision announced by the chair
20.	Decision letter to be sent to all parties in writing (within 10 working days)



Checklist for a Panel Members regarding the hearing

The panel needs to take the following points into account:

- The hearing is as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The Executive Head / Head of School may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Executive Head / Head of School is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the Executive Head / Head of School and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The Executive Head / Head of School is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale.

MINUTES OF MEETING (Based on Agenda)



School:

Meeting title:

Date and time:

Location:

Confidential item(s)

Action

CP/02/1* Proceedings of the meeting

Case for the complainants

[complainants case]

Questions from the school to the complainant:

Questions from the panel to the complainant:

*Evidence of ***** (witness 1)*

Questions from the school to witness 1:

Questions from the panel to witness 1:

The witness was released from the meeting at ** and reminded that all matters were confidential and not to be disclosed.

Case for the School

[schools' case]

Questions from the complainant/s to the school:

Questions from the panel to the school:

*Evidence of ***** (witness 1)*

Questions from the complainant/s to witness 1:

Questions from the panel to witness 1:

The witness was released from the meeting at ** and reminded that all matters were confidential and not to be disclosed.

Both parties were invited by the chair to sum up their cases.

Summing up by the complainants

Summing up by the school

Deliberation and decision of the Panel

On enquiry by the chair all parties confirmed that they had received a fair opportunity to say what they needed to. The chair advised the parties that the panel would now consider all the evidence and deliberate so as to reach a decision on the complaint in accordance with the procedure. S/He said the decision would be confirmed in writing within five school days.

Both parties were advised they could remain to hear the decision. All parties decided to leave and were released at ****.

The Panel first considered the factual issues raised by the parties and decided that, having listened carefully to the evidence of the complainants and the witnesses, and having taken account of the any other relevant written statements, on the balance of probabilities, made the following unanimous findings of fact regarding the alleged incidents:

1. [details of alleged incident] - Proved/Not proved – [reasons]

Having taken account of their finding of fact/s as above and after carefully considering all other relevant evidence and submissions presented by the complainants and the school, both orally and in writing, and also having considered the stated desired outcome of the complaint, the panel unanimously decided that the complaint was not upheld / upheld in full / upheld in part [give details] as detailed in the decision letter to be sent to all parties.

Clerk and chair

Signed(chair) Date

MINUTES OF MEETING (Formalised Version)



Academy:

Meeting title: Meeting of the Governing Body Complaints Panel

Date and time: Day, Date, 201 at pm

Location: At the academy

Purpose of the meeting: To hear the complaint raised by ***** (the complainant/s) regarding.....
(short outline)

Members of the Complaints Panel present:

***** - Governor (chair)

***** - Governor

***** - Governor

Others in attendance:

***** - headteacher

***** - complainant

***** - complainant

***** - Investigating governor

***** - clerk to the panel

Action

CP/01/1* Welcomes, introductions and chairs summary

The chair welcomed all present to the meeting and it was agreed that the form of address would be by *****. Introductions were made and the three panel governors confirmed that they had had no prior involvement with or knowledge of the complainant and/or the subject matter of the complaint.

The chair explained that the procedure to be followed was as set out under stage * in the schools' Complaints Procedure of [date] and that the panels' decision would be communicated to all parties in writing within five school days.

CP/02/1* Proceedings of the meeting

Confidential item – see separate page.

CP/03/1* Outcome

Having taken account of their finding of facts and after careful consideration of all other relevant evidence and submissions presented by the complainant/s and the school, both orally and in writing, and also having considered the stated desired outcome for the complaint, the panel unanimously

resolved

that the complaint was not upheld/ upheld in full/ upheld in part [*Outline the outcome to each point of the complaint*]

CP/04/18 Determination of confidentiality of business

The panel

resolved

The meeting closed at pm.

Signed(chair) Date



Model letter to complainant giving findings of the panel (academy)

**

**

DD/MM/YY

Dear *

.....**Academy – Your complaint in connection with issues relating to ...**

I refer to your complaint in relation to (outline complaint) presented to the Governing Body's Complaints Panel on *day, date, year*.

On behalf of the Panel, I thank you for attending the meeting to present your case. Personal attendance can be very difficult but always allows the relevant issues to be drawn out in a much more thorough and relevant way. The Panel also wish to acknowledge the positive and constructive conduct of all parties at the meeting.

In summary the Panel understood your complaint to be that:-

The Headteacher's case was that:-

The Panel took into account all the evidence presented by the Headteacher and yourselves, both orally and in writing and also considered the outcomes from your complaint that you wished to happen as indicated in your closing summary. After very careful consideration, the Panel's findings on your complaint are:-

I have copied this letter to Panel members and the Headteacher.

For the sake of completeness I have to advise that, beyond the above, there is now no further action that can be taken by the school or the Governing Body on this matter. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the Panel's decision then it is open to you to take the matter up with the Academies Group - Central Division, Education Funding Agency, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH, email academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk

Once again, thank you for attending the meeting.

Yours Sincerely

cc Headteacher/Principal
Complaint Panel members
File/clerk



Model complaint closure letter – stage two

MODEL CLOSURE LETTER FOR FORMAL STAGE TWO - GOVERNORS PANEL

Dear Mrs and Mrs

FORMAL STAGE 2 COMPLAINT ABOUT Y AND ACADEMY Z

The panel met on ...date...to hear your appeal regarding your complaint which can be summarised as follows:

That so and so/the school did/said/did not,...

Legal or administrative background

State any legal or administrative background to the case, including any legislation relevant to the investigation.

The investigation

Set out the key facts about the complaint, the findings and conclusions from the formal stage one investigation, and any continuing concerns.

Conclusion

Set out the findings of the panel

Panel decision

Outcome of the decision

Please let me know if you wish me to clarify any points for you.

In the meantime, if you remain dissatisfied with the way in which your complaint has been dealt with, you can contact the Academies Group - Central Division, Education Funding Agency, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH, email academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk

Yours sincerely