

Contents

- 1. Scope**
- 2. Policy**
- 3. Stage 1 – Informal Procedure**
- 4. Stage 2 – Formal Complaint Investigated by a Member of Staff**
- 5. Stage 3 – Formal Complaint Investigated by the Headteacher**
- 6. Stage 4 – Complaint Heard before a Complaint Panel**
- 7. Referral to the Education Funding Agency**
- 8. Administrative Matters**
 - Annex 1 – Complaint Form**

- The Complaint Panel will ask the Complainant questions, if any;
- The Complainant's relevant first witness will be invited into the room to give an account of what they saw or know;
- The Academy's representative will be invited to ask the Complainant's witness questions, if any;
- The Complaint Panel will ask the Complainant's witness questions, if any;
- The Complainant's witness will be asked to leave the room;
- If the Complainant has any further relevant witnesses, they will be invited into the room individually to provide their accounts and be questioned as outlined above;
- The Academy's representative will be invited by the Complaint Panel to respond to the complaint and make representations on behalf of the Academy;
- The Complainant will be invited to ask the Academy's representative questions, if any;
- The Complaint Panel will ask the Academy's representative questions, if any;
- The Academy's relevant first witness will be invited into the room to give an account or what they saw or know;
- The Complainant will be invited to ask the Academy's witness questions, if any;
- The Complaint Panel will ask the Academy's witness questions, if any;
- The Academy's witness will be asked to leave the room;
- If the Academy has any further relevant witnesses, they will be invited into the room individually to provide their accounts and be questioned, as outlined above;
- The Complainant will be invited by the Complaint Panel to summarise their complaint;
- The Academy's representative will be invited by the Complaint Panel to summarise their response to the complaint and the Academy's stance;
- The Complaint Panel Hearing will conclude and the Complainant and the Academy's representative will be asked to leave.

The Complaint Panel's Decision

6.16 The Complaint Panel will meet in private, either immediately after the Complaint Panel Hearing or on a subsequent date, and will consider all of the documentation and everything that they have heard at the Complainant Panel Hearing and make:

- **Findings of Fact**

The Complaint Panel will decide which facts are established to be true, on a balance of probabilities (i.e. more likely than not). If a fact is not deemed relevant, the Complaint Panel will not consider it further. The Complaint Panel will make a written record of the facts that have been established, those which have not been established and those which are not relevant, with reasons.

- **Recommendations**

The Complaint Panel will consider the facts, which they have established and will make recommendations based upon them. These recommendations may be aimed at achieving reconciliation between the parties (for example, a written apology), improving procedures or preventing a recurrence in the future. The Complaint Panel will keep a written record of their recommendations, with reasons.

Notification of the Complaint Panel's Decision

6.17 The Clerk to the Complaint Panel will write within **10 school days** of the Complaint Panel Hearing to the:

- **Complainant;**
- **the Academy's representative;**
- **Any person complained about;**

The letter will identify the issues complained about, and will confirm the Complaint Panel's findings of fact and recommendations, if any, with reasons. The letter will also confirm that, if the Complainant believes that this Complaints Policy does not comply with the Regulations, or that the Academy has not followed the procedure outlined in this Complaints Policy, the Complainant may refer their complaint to the Education Funding Agency for consideration.

6.18 The Clerk to the Complaint Panel will also ensure that a copy of the Complaint Panel's findings and recommendations are made available on the Academy's premises for inspection by the Trust, the Local Governing Committee and the Headteacher.

7. Complaint Referred to Education Funding Agency

7.1 Once a complaint has been through all the stages of this Complaints Policy, if the Complainant believes that this Complaints Policy does not comply with the Regulations, or if the Complainant believes that the Academy has not followed the procedure in this Complaints Policy, the Complainant can refer the complaint to the Education Funding Agency for consideration.

7.2 The Complainant can find further information about referring a complaint to the Education Funding Agency by pasting this page into an Internet browser:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolperformance/b00212240/making-complaint-school/complaints-free-schools-academies>

7.3 The Complainant can refer your complaint to the Education Funding Agency by completing an online form by pasting this page into an Internet browser:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolperformance/school-complaints-form>

7.4 The Complainant should be aware that the Education Funding Agency will not usually investigate the complaint itself, or interfere with the findings of the Complaint Panel, unless the decision made was manifestly unreasonable.

8. Administrative Matters

Records

8.1 The Academy will keep a central record of all concerns and complaints received, whether they were dealt with informally or formally.

Confidentiality

8.2 The Academy will keep all correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body authorised to conduct a school inspection requests access to them.

Publication

8.3 This Complaints Policy will be reviewed annually and published on the Academy's web site, as well as being made available to pupils, parents and other individuals or organisations on request.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or before if necessary by the Academy Trust Board of Trustees.

Annex 1 – Formal Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Academy who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

School/Trust _____

Your name: _____

Pupil's name (if applicable): _____

Your relationship to the pupil: _____

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint (for example, who have you spoken to and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: