

**INVICTUS**

Education Trust

**INVICTUS EDUCATION TRUST  
COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Policy Reviewed April 2020

Approved by Board of Trustees  
27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

To be reviewed by Board of Trustees  
April 2022

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## **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a robust process for dealing with complaints relating to the Trust or one of its schools, including the provision of facilities or services.

This procedure also includes a provision for dealing with vexatious, malicious or repetitive unfounded complaints.

## **2.0 Scope**

The procedure applies to general complaints made by parents and carers of pupils for whom education is being provided for by a school within the Trust, carers, the community, visitors, volunteers and students. This procedure can also be used for reporting issues in relation to third party service providers.

This procedure does not apply to concerns or complaints relating to the following, which is dealt with under separate policies:

- Exclusions
- Admissions
- Grievance or Disciplinary issues relating to a member of staff
- School Re-organisation Proposals
- Issues relating to Child Protection
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints relating to a statutory duty or power

## **3.0 Aims of Procedure**

The aim of this procedure is to:

- Achieve informal resolution wherever possible
- To deal with the complaint against an individual, school or the Trust by following the correct procedure and resolving complaints as efficiently and effectively as possible
- Provide a transparent process for dealing with complaints, both formally and informally
- Ensure that all stages of the procedure will be investigatory rather than adversarial
- Ensure that every complaint is heard and handled appropriately
- Deal with complaints in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner
- To allow redress where necessary and provide information back to the Board of Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team to improve service provision

All staff are expected to be familiar with this policy so that when a concern or complaint is raised, the concern or complaint can be dealt with efficiently and effectively, with a focus on early resolution. Staff will be advised of any policy changes so they remain up to date.

## **4.0 Legal Context**

The procedure complies with Part 7 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 in line with funding agreement requirements.

## **5.0 Complaints Procedure**

For the purpose of this policy, we adopt the approach taken by the Department for Education in defining concerns and complaints as follows:

- A concern may be treated as an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.
- A complaint may be generally recognised as an expression or statement of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

This Trust is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum.

### How we deal with a concern or complaint

When we receive a concern or complaint we will:

- Deal with people courteously and in a sensitive and helpful manner
- Put things right where it is clear we have not given the service that you have the right to expect
- Analyse complaints so the we can plan for the future by taking your views into account

If, in the course of consideration of a complaint, it is decided that disciplinary proceedings should be initiated against a member of staff, separate action will be taken as appropriate.

The complainant may make his/her representations at each stage of the procedures in person and accompanied by a representative/friend if so desired, however, this does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf.

## **5.1 General Principles**

The appended “Complaints” Forms will assist the process by focusing the complainant on the importance of being specific about the nature of their complaint and the need to provide evidence or at least to be able to cite relevant incidents.

The person(s) investigating the complaint (at any stage) should make sure that they:

- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- Meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is required)
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right
- Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- Keep notes of any discussions and meetings throughout the complaint
- Keep the complainant updated and well informed of the progress of the complaint
- Keep a record of outcomes, actions and recommendations at all stages

Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated under this procedure, however the Headteacher/Trust will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Complaints must be raised as soon as possible after an incident arises and within 6 weeks of the event being complained of or, where a series of incidents have occurred, within 6 weeks of the last of these incidents.

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

In advising complainants of the outcome of their complaint it is important to be cautious when providing specific details. To do otherwise may prejudice the ability of any employee complained about to continue in

post. The release of certain information might be an obstacle to the fair application of disciplinary/capability procedures or otherwise contravene the employee's employment or data protection rights.

The procedure is designed to facilitate resolution of concerns with the minimum of conflict. Therefore, it is important that the procedure adopted carries the confidence of all interested parties so that its use secures "closure" of any complaint or concern.

It is usually unhelpful if a complaint is broadcast to the Trust community. Therefore, the Trust will make it clear to any person who raises a concern, that the Trust will treat the matter with a high degree of confidentiality and ask the complainant to do likewise.

Reasonable support and adjustments should be made to support complainants where English may not be their first language, this could include support from a translator.

Reasonable support and adjustments should be made to support complainants who have a disability; this could include accepting a complaint verbally instead of in writing or physical adjustments to accommodate an individual into school.

## **5.2 Selecting the most appropriate procedure**

The Trust has clear procedures for receiving enquiries and complaints and an effective mechanism for "triage", so that they are directed to the appropriate person(s) for resolution. The concern or complaint will usually be referred to an appropriate member of staff in the school, however, exceptions to this are;

- Where, the complaint is about a Headteacher, it should be directed to the Chair of Governors of that school, via the Clerk of the School Governing Body.
- Where the complaint is about a Governor, it should be directed to the relevant Chair of Governors of that school, via the Clerk of the Governing Body.
- Where the complaint is about a Chair of Governors, it should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer of the trust Board at Head Office, via the Clerk to the Board of Trustees.
- Where the complaint is about a member of the Central Team at Head Office, it should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

Contact information for individual schools and Head Office are available on the Trust website. Where a complaint highlights child protection/safeguarding concerns, the matter will be referred to the Schools' Designated Safeguarding Lead to enable any action to take place as appropriate under the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **5.3 Informal Procedure**

### **Concern or Complaint**

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. As a matter of daily routine, schools receive numerous contacts from parents and other interested parties. Many of these will be resolved simply by providing information or through the arrangement of an informal meeting in order to discuss the matter. Therefore, the initial approach will normally be made to the school office, or to the individual member of staff who is likely to be able to provide the necessary information. An example meeting request form is detailed in Appendix 1.

Where the first approach is made to the Headteacher of the School or member of the Senior Leadership Team, the first step would be to refer the complainant to an appropriate person and advise them of the procedure. This is to maintain Leaders, Governors and Trustees impartiality at the later stages.

The procedure is likely to stop at this stage if the concern or complaint has been explained satisfactorily, or a shared understanding has been reached regarding the issue being raised.

In any of the circumstances outlined in Paragraph 5.2, an appropriate person will be identified to deal with the concern or complaint, as soon as the informal concern or complaint has been received.

Concerns or complaints at this stage will generally be dealt with within 5 – 10 working days.

## **5.4 Formal procedure**

Where a matter is more serious, or the informal approach has failed to resolve the issue, it may be raised formally as a complaint. This should be done in writing, see model forms in Appendices.

The stages of the formal procedure are detailed below:

### **Stage 1 – Complaint to be heard by Headteacher**

The complaint should be raised with the Headteacher. If the complaint is against the Headteacher then the complaint should be sent to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governing Board. If the complaint is against the Chair of Governors, then the complaint should be sent to the Clerk to the Board of Trustees.

It is recommended that the template form in Appendix 2 is used to submit a written complaint, as the form helps to structure the essential information needed to investigate a complaint.

Upon receipt of the complaint a meeting may be arranged with the complainant to clarify details of their concerns and of the resolution that is being sought. Once this information has been obtained, a decision will then be taken about the need for further investigation. This may involve additional meetings with the complainant to obtain further information.

Wherever possible a response to the complaint will be provided immediately, however, where this is not possible the complaint will be investigated. Once the investigation is completed, a response will be provided in writing within 10 school days or the complainant will be invited to a meeting to explain the outcome. The complainant will be provided with as much additional information as is possible in the circumstances, while respecting any right to confidentiality of third parties.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response then the complainant has the right to escalate their complaint to stage 2 of the procedure.

### **Stage 2 - Complaint heard by Panel of Governors**

If after completion of stage 1 the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 2. The complaint should be sent to the Clerk to the Governing Body requesting that their complaint is considered further.

If the complaint is against the Chair of Governors, then the complaint should be sent to the Clerk for the Board of Trustees who will make appropriate arrangements for the complaint to be dealt with.

It is recommended that the template form in Appendix 3 is used to submit the written complaint, as the form helps to structure the essential information needed to investigate a complaint.

The complaint should be raised in writing within 10 school days of the outcome of stage 1, giving clear details of the reason for the escalation of their complaint, attaching relevant papers.

The Chair of the Panel will acknowledge the complaint within 10 school days and make arrangements to hold a hearing at the earliest opportunity.

The complaints panel will consist of three people, none of whom have had prior involvement with the complaint or taken part in any previous decision making relating to the complaint, nor will they be involved in the day to day running of the school.

Once arrangements have been made for the hearing all relevant papers and documentation to be relied upon at the hearing will be sent to all parties, at least 5 school days before the hearing.

At the hearing the complainant will have the opportunity to present their case to the panel. The complainant has the right to representation at the hearing if they wish (see Paragraph 5).

The Headteacher (or nominee) of the school which the complaint refers to/Officer who has investigated the complaint at stage 1 will be asked to present their evidence on which they based their decision and to answer questions from the Panel.

The aim of the hearing is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. It does have to be acknowledged that the complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome and it may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

The Panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to the Trust's/School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not re-occur

Once the Panel has reached a decision, the complainant should be notified in writing within 5 school days. The letter will include the Panel's decision including the reasons for the decision. The complainant will be provided with as much additional information as is possible in the circumstances, while respecting any right to confidentiality of third parties.

### **Stage 3 - Complaint heard by Panel of Trustees**

If after completion of stage 2 the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 3. The complaint should be sent to the Clerk to the Board of Trustees requesting that their complaint is considered further.

It is recommended that the template form in Appendix 4 is used to submit the written complaint, as the form helps to structure the essential information needed to investigate a complaint.

The complaint should be raised in writing within 10 school days of the outcome of stage 2, giving clear details of the reason for the escalation of their complaint, attaching relevant papers.

The Chair of the Panel will acknowledge the complaint within 10 school days and make arrangements to hold a hearing at the earliest opportunity.

The complaints panel will consist of three people, none of whom have had prior involvement with the complaint or taken part in any previous decision making relating to the complaint, nor will they be involved in the day to day running of the school.

Once arrangements have been made for the hearing all relevant papers and documentation to be relied upon at the hearing will be sent to all parties, at least 5 school days before the hearing.

At the hearing the complainant will have the opportunity to present their case to the panel. The complainant has the right to representation at the hearing if they wish (see Paragraph 5).

The Headteacher (or nominee) of the school which the complaint refers to/Officer who has investigated the complaint at stage 2 will be asked to present their evidence on which they based their decision and to answer questions from the Panel.

The panel will normally consist of the Executive Headteacher/CEO and two independent Trustees who are not involved in the day to day running of the school and have had no previous input into this case.

Where Paragraph 5.2 applies, the complaints panel will be constituted accordingly and all complainants will have the opportunity to a formal 3 stage process.

At the hearing the complainant will have the opportunity to present their case to the independent panel. The complainant has the right to representation at the hearing if they wish (See Paragraph 5).

The Chair of the stage 2 panel (or their nominee) will be asked to present their evidence on which they based their decision and to answer questions from the Panel.

The aim of the hearing is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school/Trust and the complainant. It does have to be acknowledged that the complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome and it may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

The Panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to the Trust's/School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not occur

Once the Panel has reached a decision the complainant should be notified in writing within 5 school days. The letter will include the Panel's decision including the reasons for the decision. The complainant will be provided with as much additional information as is possible in the circumstances, while respecting any right to confidentiality of third parties.

The Trust will retain a written record of any meeting/hearings and actions/outcomes relating to complaints whether they are upheld or dismissed. Records are confidential and must be retained in accordance with GDPR and the Trust's Retention Policy. Records are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a Body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

This is the final stage of the Trust's internal complaints procedure.

## **5.5 The Role of the ESFA**

Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint after exhausting all of the formal stages of this procedure, they may submit a complaint to the Educations Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) using their online form or by post.



The ESFA will not overturn a stage 3 decision about a complaint but may ask us to reconsider the complaint if it deems:

- There was undue delay, or we did not comply with this complaints policy.
- We are in breach of our funding agreement with the Secretary of State.
- We have failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

If the ESFA find that the Trust's complaints procedure does not meet the regulation standards, we will be asked to take action to put this right. The ESFA can enforce their decision under the terms of the funding agreement on behalf of the Secretary of State.

## **6.0 Vexatious, Malicious or Repetitive Unfounded Complaints**

The vast majority of complaints are resolved by informal contact. There are occasions, however, when the school is required to deal with vexatious, malicious or repetitive unfounded complaints, which cause unnecessary anxiety for the member of staff associated with the complaint and also wastes valuable 'school hours'.

As an example, a persistent or vexatious complaint:

- Displays behaviours / actions which are disproportionate, harassing and repetitious
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes relative to the issue being raised and who state that their intention is to persist until that outcome is achieved
- Repeatedly makes the same complaint with minor differences but who do not accept the outcome of any investigation into their complaints.

The inclusion of this section within the procedure is to ensure that those complainants who we deem to be 'persistent or vexatious complainants' are still dealt with fairly, honestly and properly, whilst also ensuring that the service being provided or school staff are not adversely affected.

Before deciding whether it is appropriate for us to apply any restrictions in the way a 'persistent or vexatious complainant' can contact the Trust, we must inform the complainant in writing or at a face to face meeting why we feel their behaviours or actions are unacceptable. We must also give them the opportunity to change their behaviours within a reasonable timescale before taking any further action.

Therefore, where the complaint is deemed to be vexatious, malicious or repetitive without foundation, the Trust will reserve the right to inform the complainant that it cannot deal with their complaint and will outline the reasons why, which could include:

Specific actions are not identified;

- Conclusions are presented rather than actions which require enquiry
- The concerns relate to historical actions and any evidence which might have enabled an objective investigation of the complaint is no longer available
- The substance of the complaint has already been addressed under this procedure previously
- There are no identified potential sources of evidence which might allow the matter to be investigated
- The complaint is deemed to be malicious in its intent by the Board of Trustees/Governing Body

The complaint(s) meet the legal definition of harassment under one of the following acts:

- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1998

**Appendix 5 sets out our full policy statement.**

## **7.0 Monitoring and Review**

This Policy is reviewed every two years by Invictus Education Trust Board of Trustees. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

**Invictus Education Trust**  
**Complaints Procedure**  
**Informal Meeting Request Form**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to meet with .....to discuss the following matter:

Brief details of topic to be discussed:	
Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting:	
Student Name:	Tutor Group:
	Year Group:
Your Name:	
Your Address:	
Telephone Numbers	
Home:	Mobile:
Email Address:	
Relationship with School ( <i>example parent of student on the school roll</i> ):	
Signed:	Date:
<b>School Use Only</b>	
Form received by:	Date:
Response sent by:	Date:

**Invictus Education Trust**  
**Complaints Procedure**  
**Stage 1 Formal Complaint Form**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return it to the Headteacher/appropriate Officer as detailed in Paragraph 5.2, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Student Name:	Tutor Group:	Year Group:
Your Name:		
Your Address:		
Telephone Numbers		
Home:	Mobile:	
Email Address:		
Relationship with school ( <i>example; parent of student on the school roll</i> ):		
To allow the matter to be fully investigated, please provide concise details of your complaint including dates, names of witnesses etc. ( <i>You may continue on a separate sheet or attach additional documents if you wish</i> )		

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (*Example; who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?*)

What actions do you feel might resolve this complaint at this stage?

Signed:

Date:

**School Use Only**

Form received by:

Date:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Date:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Response sent by:

Date:

**Invictus Education Trust**  
**Complaints Procedure**  
**Stage 2 Formal Complaint Form**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return it to the Clerk to the Governing Body/Trust as Paragraph 5.2 applies, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Student Name:	Tutor Group:	Year Group:
Your Name:		
Your Address:		
Telephone Numbers		
Home:	Mobile:	
Email Address:		
Relationship with school ( <i>example; parent of student on the school roll</i> ):		
<p>I submitted a formal complaint to the Headteacher on .....  and I am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed</p> <p>I received a response from [insert name] on .....  I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response from the school.</p> <p>I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because:</p>		

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

Signed:

Date:

**School Use Only**

Form received by:

Date:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Date:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Response sent by:

Date:

**Invictus Education Trust**  
**Complaints Procedure**  
**Stage 3 Formal Complaint Form to Panel of Trustees/CEO**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return it to the Clerk to the Board of Trustees, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Student Name:	Tutor Group:	Year Group:
Your Name:		
Your Address:		
Telephone Numbers		
Home:	Mobile:	
Email Address:		
Relationship with school ( <i>example; parent of student on the school roll</i> ):		
I submitted a formal complaint to the Headteacher of School: _____ on _____ and I am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed		
I received a response from the Headteacher on _____ I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response from the school.		
I then raised the complaint with the Governing Body and I received a response from the Chair of Governors on _____		
I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the responses from the School/Chair of Governors.		



I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out, because:

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

Signed:

Date:

**Trust Use Only**

Form received by:

Date:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Date:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Response sent by:

Date:

## Invictus Education Trust

### Complaints Procedure

#### Policy for handling serial and unreasonably persistent, harassing or abusive complainants

The Board of Trustees are fully committed to the improvement of our schools. We welcome feedback from parents/carers and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible. The Trust's Complaints Procedure is for parents to use if they wish to raise a concern or make a formal complaint.

Sometimes, however, parents or carers pursuing complaints or other issues treat staff and others in a way that is unacceptable. Whilst we recognise that some complaints may relate to serious and distressing incidents, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour towards any members of the Trusts community.

The aim of this statement is to provide information about our Trust policy on serial and unreasonably persistent complainants or harassment of staff.

#### **What do we mean by 'serial and an unreasonably persistent complainants'?**

A serial and unreasonably persistent complainant may be anyone who engages in unreasonable behaviour when making a complaint. This will include persons who pursue complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Unreasonable behaviour may include:

- Actions which are:
  - Out of proportion to the nature of the complaint
  - Persistent – even when the complaints procedure has been exhausted
  - Personally harassing
  - Unjustifiably repetitious
  
- An insistence on
  - Pursuing unjustified complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes to justified complaints
  - Pursuing justifiable complaints in an unreasonable manner (e.g. using abusive or threatening language)
  - Making complaints in public or via a social networking site such as Facebook
  - Refusing to attend appointments to discuss the complaint.

#### **What is 'harassment'?**

We regard harassment as the unreasonable pursuit of issues or complaints, particularly if the matter appears to be pursued in a way intended to cause personal distress rather than to seek a resolution.

Behaviour may fall within the scope of this policy if:

- It appears to be deliberately targeted at one or more members of school staff or others on site, without good cause
- The way in which a complaint or other issues is pursued (as opposed to the complaint itself) causes undue distress to school staff or others
- It has a significant and disproportionate adverse effect on the Trust community

#### **What does the Trust expect of any person wishing to raise a concern?**

The Trust expects anyone who wishes to raise concerns with the Trust to:

- Treat all members of the Trust community with courtesy and respect
- Respect the needs of students and staff within the Trust
- Avoid the use of violence, or threats of violence, towards people or property
- Recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the Trust/School a reasonable time to respond to a complaint

- Follow the Trust's Complaints Procedure

### **Trust's responses to unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment**

This Policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the Trust's Complaints Procedure. Taken together, these documents set out how we will always seek to work with parents, carers and others with a legitimate complaint to resolve a difficulty.

However, in cases of serial and unreasonably persistent complaints or harassment, the Trust may take some or all of the following steps, as appropriate:

- Inform the complainant informally that his/her behaviour is now considered by the Trust to be unreasonable or unacceptable, and request a changed approach
- Inform the complainant in writing that the Trust considers his/her behaviour to fall under the terms of the Unreasonably Persistent Complaints/ Harassment Policy
- Require all future meetings with a member of staff to be conducted with a second person present. In the interests of all parties, notes of these meetings may be taken
- Inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, the Trust will respond only to written communication and that these may be required to be channelled through the Trust's Legal Service.

### **Physical or Verbal Aggression**

The Board of Trustees will not tolerate **any** form of physical or verbal aggression against a member of the Trust community. If there is evidence of any such aggression the Trust may:

- Ban the individual from entering the Trust's sites, with immediate effect
- Request an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)
- Prosecute under Anti-Harassment Legislation
- Call the police to remove the individual from the premises, under powers provided by the Education Act 1996

Legitimate new complaints will always be considered, even if the person making them is (or has been) subject to the Unreasonable Persistent Complaints/Harassment Policy. The Trust, nevertheless reserves the right, not to respond to communications from individuals, subject to the Policy.

Summary of Policy Stages

Policy Stage	How the stage is dealt with	Additional advice
Informal Stage	The Headteacher will normally identify an appropriate member of staff to deal with the concern or complaint	<p>The majority of concerns or complaints are dealt with in schools by an appropriate member of staff such as office staff, teachers and members of the school leadership team</p> <p>Complaints of this nature are normally dealt with in</p> <p>5 – 10 working days</p>
Formal Stage 1	A formal Stage 1 complaint is usually dealt with by the Headteacher	<p>Following receipt of the stage 1 formal complaint which should be set out in the template form in Appendix 2, the Headteacher will either;</p> <p>Respond immediately wherever possible</p> <p>Investigate and provide a written response within 10 days of the conclusion of the investigation</p> <p>Invite the complainant to a meeting to explain the outcome which will usually be confirmed in writing</p>
Formal Stage 2	A formal Stage 2 complaint is usually dealt with by a Panel of the School’s Governing Body, normally chaired by the Chair of Governors	<p>A stage 2 complaint should be lodged with the Clerk to the School’s Governing Body, using the template form in Appendix 3, attaching any supporting evidence, by the complainant within 10 school days of the outcome of stage 1.</p> <p>Following receipt of the stage 2 formal complaint, the Chair of the Stage 2 Complaints Panel will;</p> <p>Acknowledge the complaint within 10 school days</p> <p>Arrange a hearing at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>The complainant and a school representative will be invited to attend the hearing to share their evidence and answer questions of the Panel</p> <p>Notify the complainant of the outcome within 5 school days of the hearing</p>
Formal Stage 3		A stage 3 complaint should be lodged with the Clerk to the Board of Trustees, using the template form in Appendix 4, attaching any supporting evidence, by the complainant within 10 school days of the outcome of stage 2.

	<p>A formal Stage 3 complaint will be dealt with by a Panel of Trustees and will normally be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer.</p>	<p>All final evidence to be submitted must be with the Clerk 5 days before the date of the hearing</p> <p>Following receipt of the stage 3 formal complaint, the Chair of the Stage 3 Complaints Panel will;</p> <p>Acknowledge the complaint within 10 school days</p> <p>Arrange a hearing at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>The complainant and the Chair of the Stage 2 Panel/or their representative will be invited to attend the hearing to share their evidence and answer questions of the Panel</p> <p>Notify the complainant of the outcome within 5 school days of the hearing</p> <p>NB</p> <p>Where Paragraph 5.2 of the policy applies, the complaints panel will be constituted accordingly and all complainants will have the opportunity to a formal 3 stage process.</p>
External	Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA)	<p>Where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint after exhausting all of the formal stages of this procedure, they may submit a complaint to the Educations Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) using their online form or by post.</p> <p>Further information can be found at;</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy</a></p>