

DAYSPRING TRUST

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Reviewed September 2017

Ratified by MAT Board 20 September 2017

Introduction

This policy has been prepared in accordance with section 29 of the Education Act 2002 which requires all educational establishments to have a publicised complaints policy.

Most parents/ carers and other stakeholders have a positive relationship with our Academy but we understand that there may be occasions when concerns are raised. We have an open door policy and we are committed to taking concerns seriously, therefore we encourage our parents/carers and other stakeholders to share any concern with us on an informal basis initially.

All formal complaints are logged and held centrally, with details of the outcome of any investigation.

The main aim of this Complaints Policy is to resolve any complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

Where complaints are deemed after investigations, to be either malicious or unnecessarily time wasting, they may be referred by the Head of School to the Executive Headteacher and/or the Board of Directors and further action will be considered.

The following procedure is available to anyone within the Academy or local community to use.

Stage 1 – Informal Discussion with the Academy

It is always useful to talk through your complaint informally with the relevant person so that any concerns may be addressed.

Contact should be made in the first instance to the Academy either by telephone, e-mail or in person to informally discuss any concern. The Academy may request that you make an appointment, as this will ensure we can listen to your concerns fully and allocate an appropriate amount of time.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Head of School

If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by following informal Stage One, or if you feel that your complaint is too serious for the informal stage, you should consider confirming your complaint by letter to the Head of School (or Executive Headteacher if the complaint is about the Head of School) stating that you are making a formal complaint. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of its receipt.

The Head of School will then investigate the complaint either directly or by appointing the most appropriate senior member of staff to investigate on their behalf, and report back to them. The Head of School will respond to the complainant in person (via appointment) or via letter, with the outcome of all investigations (within 10 working days of the initial complaint being made). Where a complaint is lengthy or complex, a longer time-scale may be necessary but complainants will receive updates within the above timescales.

Stage 3 – Formal Complaint to the Executive Headteacher

If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by following Stage Two, you should consider confirming your complaint by letter to the Executive Headteacher (or Chair of the Board of Directors if the complaint is about the Executive Headteacher) stating that you are making a formal complaint. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of its receipt.

The Executive Headteacher will then investigate the complaint either directly or by appointing the most appropriate senior member of staff to investigate on their behalf, and report back to them. The Executive Headteacher will respond to the complainant in person (via appointment) or via letter, with the outcome of all investigations (within 10 working days of the initial complaint being made). Where a complaint is lengthy or complex, a longer time-scale may be necessary but complainants will receive updates within the above timescales.

Stage 4 – Complaint to the Board of Directors Complaints Appeal Panel

If a resolution cannot be reached by following either Stage One, Stage Two or Stage Three of the complaints procedure, the next step would be to make a formal complaint to the Board of Directors Complaints Appeal Panel. The Complaints Appeal Panel is independent and impartial and will consist of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management of the running of the Academy (ie not a Director or a member of staff).

If your complaint progresses to the final stage, you should contact the Chair of the Board of Directors in writing, accompanied by a copy of your original letter of formal complaint. Parents/Carers may attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a friend or other representative if they so wish.

If you feel that a complaint should be escalated to Stage Four, letters should be sent to:

The Venerable Stuart Bain

Chair of the Board of Directors

c/o Mrs W. Alder, Clerk to the Trust Board

At :-

Ian Ramsey Church of England Academy, Fairfield Road, Stockton On Tees TS19 7AJ

OR

The Venerable Bede Church of England Academy, Tunstall Bank, Ryhope, Sunderland,

SR2 0SX

Alternatively you can send a letter via the Academy.

Your request for a Stage Four panel hearing will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and you will be advised of a date for the hearing within a reasonable timescale together with information on the panel process.

Following a panel hearing, complainants will be provided with a written response (within 5 working days) where appropriate and also where this has been specifically requested.

On hearing a complaint, the panel can decide to:

- 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 Academy's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The Board of Directors Complaints Appeal Panel is the final stage in the Academy's complaints process.

Finally, if you are not satisfied that your Stage Four complaint has been dealt with appropriately, you may wish to contact the Education Funding Agency (EFA) at www.education.gov.uk via their schools complaints form or by post to: Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Details of this policy will be included on the Academy's website.

A flowchart of the Complaints Policy can be found in appendix A.

Appendix A

Complaints Policy – Flowchart

Stage One - Informal Stage

Contact the Academy via telephone,
e-mail or in person to informally
discuss any concern



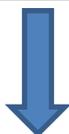
Stage Two – Formal Complaint to Head Of School

Contact Head of School in writing stating 'formal complaint'

Complaint acknowledged within 5 working days

Complaint investigated

Response to complainant within 10 working days (unless complaint lengthy or complex)



Stage Three – Formal Complaint to Executive Headteacher

Contact Executive Headteacher in writing stating 'formal complaint'

Complaint acknowledged within 5 working days

Complaint investigated

Response to complainant within 10 working days (unless complaint lengthy or complex)



Stage Four – Formal Complaint to Complaints Appeal Panel

If a resolution cannot be reached following Stages One to Three, contact Chair of Board of Directors in writing

If you are not satisfied that your Stage Four complaint has been dealt with appropriately, you may wish to contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)