



INSPIRING FUTURES PARTNERSHIP TRUST

COMPLAINTS AND RESOLUTION PROCEDURE STATEMENT

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| Policy Type | Statutory |
| Updated by | Jon Mason |
| Updated in | September 2018 |
| Review due | September 2019 |

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Most complaints are best dealt with informally. If you have any concerns about the Trust or the education provided, please discuss the matter with your child's class teacher or Year Leader at the earliest opportunity. This may be by letter, by telephone, or in person by appointment requested via the academy office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage. If you are not a parent/carer your complaint will still be dealt with in the same way but please address it in the first instance to the Principal.

Stage 1 – informal

2. If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through discussion with the class teacher or Year Leader, he/she will indicate the relevant senior manager to be approached with your concern.

3. If it is seen to be of a sufficiently serious nature, the class teacher or Year Leader will help make an appointment to discuss it with the Assistant Vice Principal/Vice Principal or Principal.

4. We consider any complaint very seriously and most complaints can be resolved at this stage.

Stage 2 – formal

5. If the matter cannot be resolved then it may be appropriate to formally state your complaint in writing to the Principal. If your complaint is about the Principal, then it may be appropriate for you to write to the Chair of Trustees to make a formal complaint.

6. Please state the nature of the complaint, the steps taken to resolve it, and the action you would like to see taken to remedy your concerns.

7. The Principal or Chair of Trustees will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the Trust and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He/she will normally write to you, usually within 5 days of receiving your formal complaint explaining how the Trust intends to proceed, this notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale to reach an outcome. You will be notified of the outcome in writing.

Stage 3 – formal

8. Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion. If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the Board of Trustees reviews the process followed by the Trust, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Chair of Trustees, within 10 days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. At this stage, a panel of **at least 3** individuals will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the Trustees. The panel will consist of Trustees who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complaint, or with the person against whom the

complaint is about, if relevant. **The Trust will also ensure that one member of the panel is independent of the management and running of the Trust and so, not a Trustee.** The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

9. You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend part of the meeting, accompanied by a friend/partner if you wish to put your case. The Principal and Chair of Trustees will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within 5 working days of the meeting.

10. The decision of the panel is final however, if you are still not satisfied, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families. To proceed further please see the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/complaints-procedure#complain-about-a-school-or-an-academy>

MONITORING AND REVIEW

11. The Trustees monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Principal logs all formal complaints received by the Trust and records how they were resolved. The Chair of Trustees examines this log on an annual basis and considers the need for any changes to the procedures.

AVAILABILITY

12. The copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request. It is also mentioned in the Trust's academy prospectus and via the Trust's academy website.

ESTABLISHING A COMPLAINTS PANEL

A panel will be formed consisting of 3 individuals as agreed by the Chair of Trustees prior to the hearing.

There are several points which any individual sitting on a complaints panel needs to remember:

- It is important that the hearing is independent and impartial and that it is seen to be so. No Trustee may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it, or knows any person(s) involved in the complaint (excluding members of staff), either directly or indirectly. In deciding the make-up of the panel, Trustees need to try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of Trustee and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.
- The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the Trust and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised the complainant might 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.
- An effective panel will acknowledge that many complainants feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as

possible. The layout of the room will set the tone and care is needed to ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial.

- Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child. Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child does not feel intimidated. The panel needs to be aware of the needs of the child and give them equal consideration to those of adults.
- Trustees sitting on a panel need to be aware of the complaints procedure.

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Appendix: Flowchart summary of Complaints Procedure

