



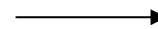
Retford Post 16 Centre

Complaints Procedure

Complaints Procedure

Informal Stage 1

Complaint raised with Centre Staff (G Murphy / J White)



Issue resolved informally

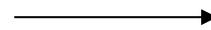


Issue not resolved



Informal Stage 2

Complaint raised with Principal's PA of appropriate school and referred to relevant senior staff member



Issue resolved



Issue not resolved



Informal Stage 3

Complaint raised via the Principal's PA of appropriate school to be dealt with by the Principal



Issue resolved



Issue not resolved



Informal Process referred to Chair of Post 16 Governors



Formal Process Convened – Complaints Panel

Retford Post 16

Complaints Policy 2016-2018

Principles : working with parents and young people

We aim to work positively with all parents/carers and to communicate effectively about their child's education. With this in mind, we encourage constructive feedback on the quality of education we offer and encourage parents to discuss any concerns **at the earliest stage**, so that they can be resolved promptly and informally. Whilst not wishing to encourage parents to rush to complain, it is easier to investigate a situation when the matter is still relatively fresh. Experience suggests that concerns that are more than a month old are harder to deal with.

Parents/carers and young people can expect:

- Their complaint to be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
- To be spoken to politely and given the opportunity to explain their views
- To be able to express the outcome they are hoping for at the outset.
- Their complaint to be treated confidentially, sharing information with others only as is necessary.
- The Centre to reflect on its practice, as a result of any concerns / complaints and consider whether changes are needed to improve practice in the school.

Centre staff can expect:

- To be treated with respect and spoken to politely. Swearing, shouting or making personal comments (including on Social Media) are not acceptable conduct.
- To be given a reasonable time to deal with any complaint.

Schools are required by law to have a wide range of dealings with students' parents and can find themselves caught up in disputes between a number of adults, each claiming to have parental responsibility for a particular child. In such circumstances, the Centre will follow the DfE Guidance on "Understanding and Dealing with Issues Relating to Parental Responsibility". Where a parent's action, or proposed action, conflicts with the school's ability to act in the child's best interests, the Centre will aim to resolve the problem with that parent, but avoid becoming involved in conflict. However, there may be occasions when the Centre needs to decline requests for action from one or more parents and takes action which is felt to be in the best interest of the student.

Telephoning: As most staff are based at two institutions, messages are best left with Mrs Jackie Hall on Reception who will pass them on to the appropriate member of staff.

Record keeping: All concerns or complaints will be logged, to include an outline of the concern; dates on which contact was made, any witness statements and the outcome/actions agreed. All complaints will be kept on file and reviewed regularly, as part of our school improvement reviews.

Conduct of meetings: It is good practice to give everyone present the opportunity to explain their point of view clearly and to listen to each other's views. The outcome should be agreed by all parties and will depend upon circumstances.

Section A: Informal Stage 1

Curriculum Matters: If your concern relates to a curriculum area, please ask to speak to a member of the relevant department. Information is on both Academies' websites, but Mrs Hall will be able to pass your message on to the appropriate person.

Special Educational Needs

If your concern relates to your child's special learning needs, please ask to speak to Mrs Paula Fox, Teaching Assistant, who should be able to help you.

Other matters: at base schools, tutors and Heads of House are often the first port of call for concerns. This set up does not transfer easily to Retford Post 16. We would encourage you therefore to address any concerns you may have initially to Ms Gemma Murphy or Mr Jason White who share leadership of the Centre. In most instances, they will be able to address your concern without it going beyond an informal stage.

To allow us to deal with any concerns you have effectively, please allow us adequate time to investigate:

- You should expect someone at the Centre to make contact with you to discuss your concern within 24 hours
- We will aim to provide you with an update after five working days
- We will aim to confirm resolution of the issues you raised after ten working days

Informal Stages 2 and 3

Should we not be able to resolve your concern, then the person you speak to will advise you of where to take your concern further: it may be to the Principal's PA at the school which your child used to attend (if from the Elizabethan or Retford Oaks) or it could be the Principal's PA from the school which employs the teacher, if your concerns relate to a specific member of staff.

If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by Centre Staff and within a reasonable timeline, as outlined above, please contact the Principal's PA of their school. She will take the details and discuss the concern with the Principal. Please be aware that Stage 2 may take an additional ten working days while someone looks into the substance of your complaint.

If you are still not happy with the outcome, the Principal's PA will organise a meeting for you to discuss the matter further with the Principal (Stage 3). Notes will be taken at the meeting and actions agreed. A copy of the notes taken at the meeting will be sent within 5 school days – along with confirmation of the outcome of that meeting.

Any safeguarding issues will also be reported, by the Principal, to the Local Authority Duty Officer (LADO).

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the Complaints Procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It is important for parents to recognise, that when the Centre really has done everything they can in response to a complaint, it is a poor use of the Academy's time and resources to reply to repeated letters, emails or telephone calls making substantially the same points. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.

Section C : Complaints about the Principal

It is always best to try to resolve the issue directly with the Principal first and as early as possible, in order to maintain good working relationships with the Centre and base school. However, if you wish to complain about the Principal, a formal complaint must be made in writing and sent to the school for the attention of the Chair of Governors. He will review the complaint and contact you directly.

Section D: Complaints Panel

This is a formal procedure and we believe that it is important to ensure that all other options for informal resolution are exhausted before referring a complaint to The Complaints Panel.

The Complaints Panel will be made up of two governors, who have not previously been involved in hearing the complaint plus an Independent Advisor. **20 school days' notice** of the hearing will be given to all parties to enable paperwork to be made available. Any witness statements used will need to be redacted (names removed) and the parent/carer will be given the opportunity to submit any supporting documentation, in advance if the meeting. Parents/carers are able to bring an advocate: friend, member of the family to the meeting.

The role of the panel is to ensure that the complaints policy has been followed or academy procedure followed.

The hearing will be chaired by a governor. The Principal will be invited to the meeting and given the opportunity to present a paper in advance. The Principal may also nominate other members of staff who have been involved but care will be taken to ensure that the hearing is fair and independent.

The hearing will provide an opportunity for both parties to present their evidence, with opportunities for questioning by panel members. Hearings will be minuted by a Clerk and the panel will reach an independent majority decision about whether the complaint should be rejected or upheld, and decide on the appropriate action to be taken. Both the parent/carer and the Principal will be provided with a copy of the decision in writing as soon as possible, along with next steps and recommendations.

Training

Staff and governors will undertake relevant training in how to handle complaints.

Application

Any queries regarding the application of this policy should be referred in writing to lead staff at the Centre.

DATE OF REVIEW:	October 2016
SIGNED ON BEHALF OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM:	
DATE:	
SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE POST 16 GOVERNING BODY:	
DATE:	
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	Autumn 2017