



Complaints Policy

Policy Review Date: September 2018

Version	Date	Updated By
1.1	May 2014	A.McGregor
1.3	June 2015	A.McGregor
1.5	May 2017	M.Storey
1.6	October 2017	K.Anson
1.7	September 2018	N. Parker

Policy written in response to:

- The Education Act 2002
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Immigration Act 2016
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Protection of Children Act 1999: A Practical Guide to the Act for all Organisations
- Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5: Children's Homes
- Assessing Risk in Child Protection (1998). Cleaver, H., Wattam, C. and Cawson, P. London
- NSPCC. Cm 5730 (2003)
- Safeguarding Children in Education. Department for Education and Skills (2004a). London:
- Working with Children, DfES September 2005
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Promote the welfare of children, HM Government 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016

- Independent School Standards 2014
- DfE 'Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016
- The Immigration Act 2016

Introduction

At Longdon Park School we take complaints seriously. We view them as an important way of improving what we do. Our complaints policy and procedures are clear, user friendly and readily accessible to all stakeholders, including those with disabilities. It is important to the organisation that young people, staff, parents, carers, referring authorities and other agencies are genuinely able to raise concerns and make suggestions for changes and improvements. We are committed to listening when young people and stakeholders have something to say about the services we offer.

Key Statements

- We are committed to delivering the best possible care and education to the young people in our care. All staff are accountable to the young people, their parents, and carers, placing authorities and the local community in delivering services of the highest standard.
- All complaints will be treated confidentially except where this would put a young person at risk. Every young persons safety, welfare and well-being always remains our first concern.
- All complaints concerning child abuse or allegations of professional abuse are brought to the attention of the LADO and the Referring Authority IMMEDIATELY.

What is a complaint?

Our definition of a complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction regarding our actions or processes that requires a response. A complaint may arise, for example, if a person thinks that we have:

- Done something wrong
- Failed to do something we should have done
- Acted unfairly or improperly

Types of complaint might include:

- Complaint by a parent/carer/external agency or individual about a member of staff
- Complaint by a parent/carer/ external agency or individual about a young person

- Complaint by a young person about another young person
- Complaint by a young person about a member of staff

N.B. Where staff members feel the need to raise a complaint regarding a colleague they should do so in accordance with the grievance policy

Raising concerns and making complaints about the School

Our complaints procedure covers formal complaints about our work and working practice. Where stakeholders would like to raise concerns informally over the phone, these will not be treated as a formal complaint. However, during the conversation an informal concern could be raised to a formal complaint level.

What to do if you want to complain

Complaints should be directed to Nyree Parker, Headteacher, Longdon Park School, Park Hill, Hilton Road, Egginton, Derbyshire DE65 6GU

Telephone: 01283 733195

Email: nyree.parker@longdonparkschool.co.uk

If the complaint is against the Headteacher the complainant should contact James Joyce, the Assistant Director of Education. He can be contacted at james.joyce@acorncare.co.uk

Complaints from Parents/Carers

The procedures below will be followed in the event of a complaint being made by parents or carers against the school.

Informal Concern

If parents or carers have a concern regarding an element of the school, they may initially wish to contact the school informally either by telephone or in person (having made an appointment), to discuss the concern and potential solutions. Where a stakeholder has indicated an informal

concern, the school will endeavour to ensure that the concern is heard and discussed within 15 school days. At any point during this process the concern may be raised to a formal complaint either by the stakeholder or the school. Following discussions, should the stakeholder feel that an appropriate solution has not been found or the outcome of the discussions is not satisfactory, they may decide to raise a formal complaint.

Formal Complaint

Formal complaints must be made in writing (which includes email). If you make a complaint by phone, we will make a detailed record, but no formal action will be taken until we receive a written complaint. It is important that we have all the information, with all the points you want us to consider, from the start of the process. This will allow us to deal with your complaint more quickly and will reduce the need to ask for more information. You must give the reasons for your complaint clearly, with the main areas of concern set out and supported by examples.

Stage One

- The Headteacher will assess your complaint and decide who will be responsible for carrying out the investigation. You will be sent an acknowledgement within five working days of receiving the complaint. We will also confirm what we will do next and who will be responsible for contacting you again.
- We will send a response, which will aim to answer all of your points of concern, within 15 working days. This will include details of how to ask for further internal and independent review.
- If you are still not satisfied the formal complaints procedure will move to stage two.

N.B. The timelines stated above refer to term time only. Where appropriate complaints made during school holidays will be managed within the same time frames, however, this is not always possible due to staff holidays and office closures

Stage Two

If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with either the outcome or the progress being made, then an appeal may be made in writing to: James Joyce, Assistant Director of Education, Acorn Care and Education Limited, 1 Merchants Place, River Street, Bolton, BL2 1BX.

The Assistant Director will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 working days of receiving the written appeal. This will usually be via email.

The Assistant Director will review the appeal and respond to the complaint within 15 working days with an outcome of the appeal.

Should the stakeholder feel that the outcome of the appeal to the Assistant Director of Education is unsatisfactory, they may request a Complaints Appeal Panel be held. They should make this request in writing to the Assistant Director, within 5 working days of receipt of the Stage Two outcome.

Stage Three

Where a Complaints Appeal Panel has been requested, the Assistant Director will acknowledge receipt of this request within 5 working days of receipt, stating the contact details of the person who will oversee the panel.

Acorn Care and Education will convene a Complaints Appeals Panel. This panel will act impartially to ensure that all parties involved in the complaint have the opportunity to present their case. The panel will include:

- A representative of the school who is not involved with the original complaint /complainant
- A representative of Acorn Care and Education
- A person who is independent of the school and Acorn Care and Education

The complaints panel hearing will take place within 15 working days of Acorn Care and Education being contacted.

Monitoring and Review

The School keeps the volume and nature of complaints received under regular review. Summary information is reported to Acorn Care and Education on a termly basis. Acorn Care and Education monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make changes where necessary.

Record Keeping

We maintain a complaints log that records all formal representations or complaints, the action taken to address them and the outcomes. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are maintained in a confidential file, separate to the young person's file. This file is

accessible to the Senior Team and visiting members of Acorn Care and Education, as well as to OFSTED on request when they inspect. Copies will also be made available to the Placing Authority on request. All records and any correspondence or statements relating to a complaint will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, The Education and Inspection Act 2006 and The Childcare Act 2006.

Complaints from Pupils

Complaints from pupils are taken seriously and are used as learning opportunities for the school. The following procedure will be followed should a pupil raise a formal written complaint, using the pupil complaints form (appendix a). Where a pupil makes a formal complaint they will be informed of the processes involved and the types of information that may need to be passed on to other agencies e.g. social care, the police etc.

Within school, pupils may talk to any member of Education Staff.

Occasionally pupils may suggest they want to make a formal complaint, however, merely talking to a trusted adult can help resolve a situation. These situations will not be recording in the complaints log, but will be recorded in the school incident reports to ensure patterns of behaviour can be monitored.

All formal complaints made by pupils should be done so on the pupil complaint form (appendix a), which may be completed with support from a staff member or parent. All completed pupil complain forms will be logged. Where the complaint suggests a Child Protection issue a formal referral will be made to the local Safe Guarding board in line with Longdon Park School's Child Protection Policy*.

The school's response to the complaint will also be recorded. If the complaint is serious the pupil's parents/carers will be informed of both the complaint and the outcome. Some complaints will be referred to other agencies or to the Local Authority. If necessary a meeting will be called to discuss the issues further.

If a complaint is upheld the school undertakes to respond to all recommendations and with appropriate actions. The school will regularly review this policy and undertakes to evaluate and to respond to recommendations in an ongoing attempt to improve practice. .

A pupil may ask to speak to an adult from an outside agency. The school will wherever possible put the pupil in contact with a representative of the appropriate agency. The referral will be noted in the pupil's file.

We will try to resolve the complaint within 10 school days from the day the pupil made the complaint.

*See School **Safeguarding Policy** for further guidance.