

Complaints Policy

Adopted by Board: 17 March 2020

Review Period: 3yr

Review Date: March 2023

Person responsible for policy: Clerk

**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

This policy should be used in conjunction with The Education (Independent Institution Standard) Regulations 2010, Part 7, which outlines the provisions for complaints with Academies.

**Introduction**

The majority of issues raised by parents or students are concerns rather than complaints. BePART Educational Trust is committed to taking concerns seriously at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without recourse to formal procedures. The prime aim of the Trust’s policy is to resolve the concern as fairly and as speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

Policy

* The institution will listen to all concerns, complaints and suggestions and view them as opportunities to improve the quality of the service provided
* Complaints brought by staff should be investigated using the Grievance procedure and not this Complaints Policy.
* Anonymous complaints will not be considered.
* Staff should be made aware of the procedure so that they will know what to do when they receive a complaint.
* The institution will retain a written record of all complaints and whether they were resolved at informal or formal level.
* All written records, statements and correspondence relating to an individual complaint will be treated confidentially. The institution is required however to make these records available to the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 162A of the 2002 Education Act.
* Written information sent out to a complainant may be either electronic or hard copy.
* At each stage of the complaints procedure, the member of staff responsible will consider the seriousness of the complaint and how the complaint may be resolved.
* The purpose of this procedure is to identify all of the facts that are pertinent to the complaint so that it can be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. However there may be occasions when despite all stages of the procedure being followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Principal/Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body may inform the complainant in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and the matter is now closed.
* The complaints procedure sets out the time limits for each stage of the complaints process. However, where a complaint is of a particularly complex nature or further investigations are required to ascertain facts, new time limits may be set. The complainant will be sent details of any changes to the deadlines with an explanation for the delay.
* A copy of the Complaints Policy can be found on BePART Educational Trust’s and the institutions’ websites.

BePART Educational Trust complaints procedure has four main stages:

**Stage 1 – Informal**

* Most concerns and complaints can be satisfactorily resolved at this stage. The institution requests parents make their first contact with their son’s/daughter’s designated Tutor or a member of staff. It is expected that most issues would be resolved within **5 working days**. Should this informal stage require more time, then the institution will inform the complainant of this in writing as soon as this is known. Should initial discussions appear unlikely to resolve matters, either party may initiate a move to Stage 2.
* A copy of the institution’s Complaints Policy will be forwarded to the complainant at this stage.

**Stage 2 – Formal Written Complaint heard by a senior member of staff**

* Formal complaints should be put in writing. This will be designated to a senior member of staff to investigate. Details of the complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The institution will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **5 working days** and provide a target date for a response, normally within **15 working days**. A letter should be written if the target cannot be met, explaining the reason for the delay and provide a revised target date.
* Once all the facts have been established, the senior member of staff considering the complaint will issue a written response. If it is felt that the matter is too serious to be dealt with at this stage, then the matter will be immediately escalated to Stage 3.

**Stage 3 – Formal Written Complaint heard by Principal or Headteacher**

* The Principal or Headteacher will delegate the task of collating information to another staff member but not the decision on the action to be taken. The same timings will apply as in Stage 2. Should the complainant not accept the findings, they can appeal and escalate the complaint to Stage 4.

**Stage 4 – Formal Written Complaint heard by the Chair of the Local Governing Body (LGB)**

* If still dissatisfied, the complainant should write full details of the complaint to the Clerk of the LGB within **15 working days** of the receipt of the outcome at the previous stage and request that their complaint be referred to the Chair of the LGB. The Clerk should write to the complainant within **5 working days**, acknowledging receipt of the written request for the complaint to be heard.
* The Chair of the LGB will investigate the complaint and issue a written response within **15 working days**.
* The findings of the Chair of the Local Governing Body are final.

**Complaints against the Principal or Headteacher**

* If the complaint is about the Principal or Headteacher, then the Chief Executive will hear the complaint. If the Chief Executive is the Principal or Headteacher, then the Chair of BePART Educational Trust will hear the complaint.
* The findings of the Chief Executive/Chair of BePART Educational Trust are final.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

BePART Educational Trust will review this policy every three years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.