

## Complaints Procedure



Farrington Community Academy ("the Academy") has prepared this procedure which is to be followed for all complaints. The procedure has three stages: the informal stage, the formal stage and the appeal stage. Complainants must raise their complaints at the informal stage in the first instance.

### Timelines

The Academy commits to responding to all complaints seriously and responding to complaints on a timely basis. In return the Academy expects complaints to be made as soon as possible after an incident arises, and in general within three months of the incident. Where complaints are raised more than three months after the incident, the complainant must explain why the complaint was not raised earlier. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Academy will not consider complaints raised more than three months after the incident.

### Concerns vs Complaints

A concern is an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought. A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

This procedure covers complaints. Anyone may raise a complaint, whether or not they are a parent or carer. Anyone may raise a concern. Concerns may be raised at any time with an appropriate person. In most cases this will be a member of the Academy's staff. The Academy takes all complaints seriously.

### Informal stage

The Academy strives to maintain an open and honest two-way dialogue with students, parents and carers and other stakeholders. The Academy endeavours to solve all complaints at the informal stage because it is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible time. An informal complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing.

There are two separate routes for raising complaints at the informal stage.

### Parents and Carers of attending students

Parents and carers should bring the complaint to the attention of the Academy via one of the following contacts: Usual contacts would be:

1. Year Managers
2. Deputy Headteacher/Pastoral Manager (Mrs B. McCrudden)
3. Head Teacher (Mr H. Kemp)

The Academy will respond to complaints within 2 working days. Some complaints may require further time to investigate. In this instance the Academy will provide an update within 2 working

days and provide a deadline for providing a full response. The timescale will be realistic and reasonable. If there is a delay in providing a full response, the complainant will be provided with details of the new deadline and explanation for the delay.

Should the matter have been initially raised with either Year Managers or the Deputy Headteacher/Pastoral Manager it could be further raised at a second informal stage with the Head Teacher.

Where the complaint is against the Head Teacher, the complaint must be raised with the Chair of the Governors at the following address: -

Mrs G Hossack  
Chair of Governors  
C/o: Governor Support Officer  
Law and Governance  
Room 1.62  
Civic Centre, Burdon Road  
Sunderland SR2 7DN

Where the complaint is against the Chair of Governors or any individual governor, the complaint should be made by writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body at the following address:-

Mr Gordon Brown  
Governor Support Officer  
Law and Governance  
Room 1.62  
Civic Centre, Burdon Road  
Sunderland SR2 7DN

### **Complainants not parents of attending students**

Complainants who are not parents or carers of attending students should contact the Academy directly (0191 553 6013 or email [enquiries@farringdonca.net](mailto:enquiries@farringdonca.net)) to raise their complaint. The Academy guarantees to respond to complaints within 2 working days. Some complaints may require further time to investigate. In this instance the Academy will provide an update within 2 working days and provide a deadline for providing a full response. The timescale will be realistic and reasonable. If there is a delay in providing a full response, the complainant will be provided with details of the new deadline and explanation for the delay.

The responder is likely to be one of the 2 posts above a Year Manager, the Deputy Headteacher/Pastoral Manager or the Head Teacher. The procedure would follow therefore as above.

Where the complaint is against the Head Teacher, the complaint must be raised with the Chair of the Governors at the following address: -

Mrs G Hossack  
Chair of Governors  
C/o: Governor Support Officer  
Law and Governance  
Room 1.62

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### **Formal stage**

Complaints may only be raised at the formal stage if the complaint has been raised at the informal stage, a full response has been provided and the complainant is not satisfied. If a complaint is raised at the formal stage before the informal stage has been completed, the complainant will be directed to complete the informal stage first.

Following the informal stage a complainant must assess whether the complaint has been handled satisfactorily. Should the complainant wish to take the complaint to the formal stage the following procedure should be followed:

1. Complete the Academy's Complaints Procedure Form, this can be obtained from Farringdon Community Academy, 553 6013 x129 or via the website, [www.farringdonschool.co.uk](http://www.farringdonschool.co.uk). If the complainant is unable to complete the Complaints Procedure Form due to disability or learning difficulties, they should contact the Academy at the address above and an appropriate alternative method of recording the complaint will be determined depending on the individual circumstances of the complainant.
2. Send the form to the Chair of Governors, Mrs G. Hossack, using the address on the form or email (Insert email address).

The complaint will be investigated by the Governing Body and a written response will be provided within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint. Some complaints may require further time to investigate. In this instance the Academy will provide an update within 10 working days and provide a deadline for providing a full response. The timescale will be realistic and reasonable. If there is a delay in providing a full response, the complainant will be provided with details of the new deadline and explanation for the delay.

### **Panel Hearing: Appeal stage**

Complaints may only be raised at the appeal stage if the complaint has been raised at the informal stage and formal stages, full responses have been provided and the complainant is still not satisfied. If a complaint is raised at the appeal stage before the informal and formal stages have been completed, the complainant will be directed to complete the informal and formal stages first.

Should the Formal stage fail to satisfy the complainant there is an Appeal Stage where the

Complaint will be reviewed by a panel consisting of the Board of Directors of the Multi-Academy Trust and an independent member Panel Hearing Stage. A complainant will be notified as to the date of the hearing this will be at least 1 week's notice. To raise a complaint at the appeal stage, the complainant should contact the Clerk to the Board of Directors of the Multi-Academy Trust: -

Mr Gordon Brown  
Governor Support Officer  
Law and Governance  
Room 1.62  
Civic Centre, Burdon Road  
Sunderland SR2 7DN

The panel will consist of Directors of the Multi-Academy Trust and will have one independent member (someone not connected to the academy in any way). The independent member will be appointed by the Directors of the Multi-Academy Trust and may be from another local school, a representative from Sunderland City Council, or any other party with relevant skills and experience to listen to and resolve the complaint.

### **Complaints not Covered by this Procedure**

For the avoidance of doubt certain types of complaint are not covered by this procedure. These include:

- Admissions to the Academy
- Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- School re-organisation proposals
- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
- Exclusion of children from school
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures
- Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use the Academy's premises or facilities