

What issues should this procedure not deal with?

This procedure will be relied upon in respect of all complaints by parents/carers against the Academy except in the following areas, where separate policies exist:

- Child protection allegations
- Exclusions
- Admission appeals
- Appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications
- Provision of collective worship and religious education
- Complaints about the statementing process for children with special educational needs
- Disciplinary issues relating to members of staff
- Allegations of abuse

For clarity:

There is a difference between a concern and a complaint.

- Concerns ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures.
- Complaints will be dealt with openly, fairly, promptly and without prejudice.

For a copy of the full Focus-Trust complaints procedure please visit:

<http://www.focus-trust.co.uk/downloads/>

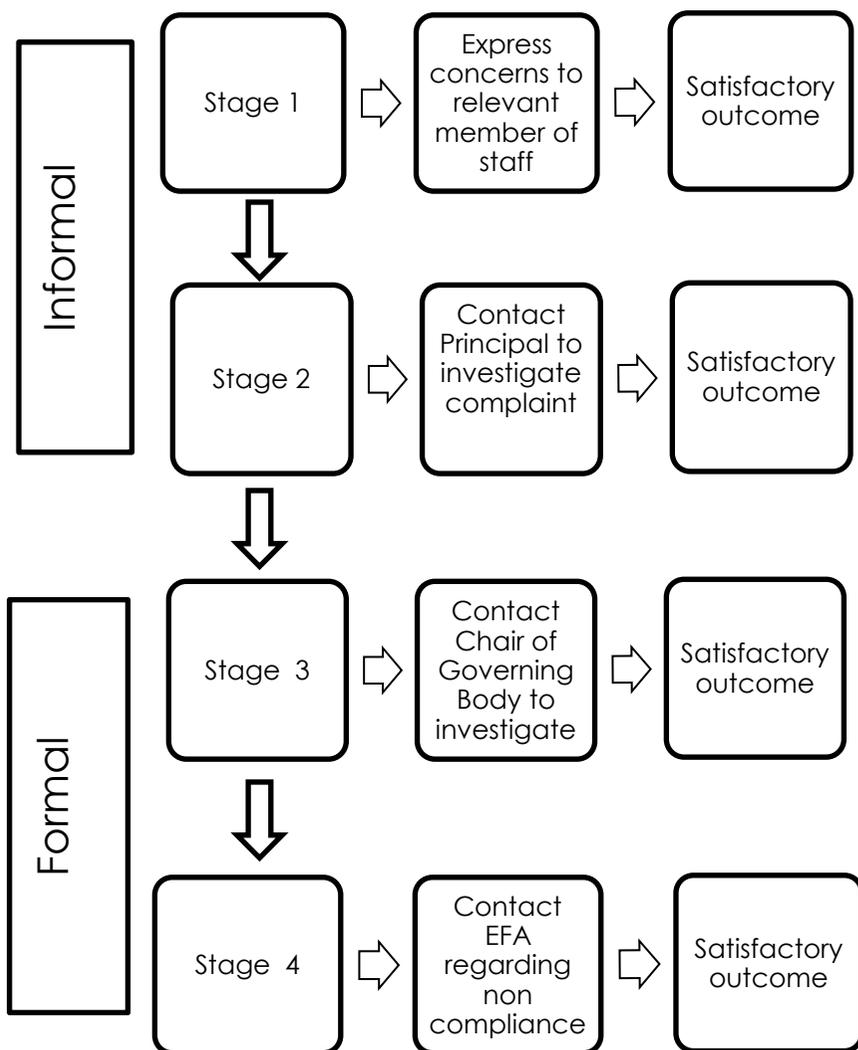
A Brief Guide to Academy Complaints

Introduction

We have a strong commitment towards working in positive partnership with the whole school community. An academy is a busy place where there are many interactions between pupils, parents, carers and staff as part of the everyday life of the academy. We have an ethos of respecting the rights of all members of the community and as part of our curriculum and teaching we work to instil this in our children. From time to time something may go wrong, or you may think we can do something better.

We recognise the need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage reduces the numbers that develop into formal complaints. We aim to ensure that concerns are handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. Our formal complaints procedure is only necessary if efforts to resolve the concern informally are unsuccessful. Where an individual may feel that an issue has not been dealt with appropriately it is important, for all involved, that there is a clear and transparent process for a complaint to be looked into and followed up.

The stages for making a complaint



Dividing the complaint process into stages enables a clear understanding of how to make concerns known and where to turn to if a satisfactory outcome has not been reached

Stage 1

Meet with, write or speak to the relevant member of staff, their immediate manager or a senior manager in an attempt to resolve the issue.

Stage 2

If not satisfied after Stage 1, write to the Principal. He/she will investigate the complaint and respond within ten (10) working days. If your complaint relates to the Principal, write to the Chair of the local Governing Body and he/she will arrange for the complaint to be investigated and respond within ten (10) working days.

Stage 3

If not satisfied after Stage 2, write to the Chair of the Local Governing Body who will convene a Complaints Panel of at least three (3) people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. This panel will include one (1) person independent of the management and running of the Academy. The panel will hear the complaint and respond within fifteen (15) working days.

Stage 4

Complaints about the Academy failing to comply with this procedure or with any of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education may be made to the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The EFA will consider complaints that fall into three categories:

1. Where there is undue delay or the academy did not comply with its own complaint procedure when considering a complaint.
2. Where the academy is in breach of its funding agreement with the secretary of state.
3. Where an academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.