



Complaints Policy

Document Control

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1. Who Can Make a Complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents of children that are registered at our academies. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to the Trust or any Academy within the Trust about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

2. Concerns and Complaints

Concerns should be raised with the class/form teacher or a member of the Leadership Team by contacting the school via email or telephoning the school office to arrange an appointment. It is essential that parents and the school work together in a constructive and open manner to address concerns at this stage, as early resolution is always in the best interests of the child.

We recognise the importance of distinguishing between a concern and a formal complaint. By taking informal concerns seriously from the outset, we aim to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively, reducing the likelihood of concerns escalating into formal complaints. The school is committed to working in partnership with parents, engaging in meaningful discussions, and exploring possible solutions to ensure that concerns are addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

Our expectation is that both parents and the school will make every reasonable effort to resolve concerns through dialogue and mutual understanding. The Concern stage must be fully explored and exhausted before moving to Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy. A formal complaint can only be submitted if all informal attempts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied. Complaints may not progress through the formal stages of the policy if parents do not work with the school to take all reasonable steps to resolve the issue informally during the Concern stage. See Section 13 for information about closure of complaints.

This approach ensures that concerns are handled as informally and effectively as possible, fostering positive relationships between parents and the school while upholding the best interests of all involved.

3. How To Raise a Concern or Complaint

The Complaints Policy is available on each Academy website and will guide the complainant through the process.

Any concern which remains unresolved after exhausting the Concern stage can be escalated to a formal complaint at Stage 1. You should complete Appendix 1 'Stage 1 Complaint form'. If this form is not completed in full, the complaint will not be considered further. If you require support to complete this form, please contact the school office or agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau¹. You will need to indicate your preferred method of communication on the 'Stage 1 Complaint form'.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against academy staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to the Headteacher via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

¹ <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, sent to info@legereducationtrust.com

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be sent to info@legereducationtrust.com

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

4. Anonymous Complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher or Chair of the AGB, if appropriate, will determine whether an anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

5. Timescales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

6. Complaints Received Outside of Term Time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

7. Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by the Trust/Academy, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions to schools Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals 	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with the City of Doncaster Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milovan Orlandich LADO@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737332 Helen Myers LADO@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737332
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion of children from school* 	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions . *complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing 	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.

	The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus . Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff grievances 	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff conduct 	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities 	Providers have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Curriculum - content 	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against the Trust/Academy in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

8. Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the Trust/Academy wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology

9. Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

10. Stage 1

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteacher (unless they are about the Headteacher in which case the formal complaint should be made to the Chair of the relevant AGB). This should be submitted in writing using the 'Stage 1 Complaint form' which can be found at Appendix 1.

The Headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days.

Within this response, the Headteacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Headteacher can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.

During the investigation, the headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Headteacher will provide a formal written response within 10 school days of the date of acknowledgement of the complaint. If the Headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the Trust/Academy will take to resolve the complaint.

The Headteacher will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

Complaints about the Headteacher or member of the governing body must be made to the Trust, via info@legereducationtrust.com if the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- the entire governing body or
- the majority of the governing body

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the governing body. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

11. Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of the governing body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the school office, within 10 school days of acknowledgement of the Stage 1 response.

The school will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The school will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the school will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed. If the complainant does not attend the meeting, the complaint will not proceed, and the complainant will lose the right to the complaint being heard and the matter will be closed. If a meeting is deferred then the panel will rearrange the meeting date, to be held as soon as possible but no longer than 25 school days from acknowledgement of the Stage 2 request.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the school will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee. If there are fewer than three governors from the Academy available, the school will source any additional, independent governors through another local school, in order to make up the committee.

Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. For the avoidance of doubt, the complainant's support person will be there to provide moral support and will not play any part in the proceedings and will not speak on behalf of the complainant. We recognise there are limited occasions where legal representation may be appropriate. For example, if a school employee is a witness in a complaint, they may be entitled to bring union or legal representation.

If a complainant commences legal action against the school in relation to their complaint, the Academy will close the complaints procedure, and this will be dealt with through legal proceedings.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least 5 school days before the meeting, the school will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least 3 school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 2 school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Where there are communication difficulties, the Complaints Panel may use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point. All parties should agree in advance to such a recording, if agreement is not reached then no recording should take place.

Schools are data controllers in their own right and the Complaints Panel therefore will not allow complainants to record meetings, unless it is required for the purposes of a reasonable adjustment. This is because there may be identifiable personal information recorded. Any recording taken without consent from all parties will not form part of the complaint and will be disregarded.

The Complaints Panel will consider, with regard to any recording(s):

- how any decision to allow recording(s) may affect any third parties called to act as witnesses
- the impact and consequences on the individuals involved in the complaint in the event recordings are lost or leaked.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the Trust/Academy with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 10 school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the Trust/Academy.

If the complaint is jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or the entire governing body or the majority of the governing body, Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the Trust/Academy will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

12. Complaints about the CEO/Trust Staff/Trustees

If a complaint is escalated to the Trust or if a complainant wishes to complain directly about the Trust, then a concern should be raised. Once the concern stage has been exhausted then a formal complaint can be raised using the Stage 1 form. The complaint should be sent to the CEO to be investigated via info@legereducationtrust.com. An independent investigator may be commissioned.

The CEO will write to the complainant acknowledging the complaint within 3 school days of the date that the written request was received. The acknowledgement will confirm that the complaint will now be investigated under this Complaints Policy and will confirm the date for providing a response to the complainant.

Following the investigation, the CEO will write to the complainant confirming the outcome within 15 school days of the date that the letter was received. If this time limit cannot be met, the CEO will write to the Complainant within 10 school days of the date that the letter was received, explaining the reason for the delay and providing a revised date.

If the complaint concerns the CEO or a Trustee, the complaint should be investigated by the Chair of the Trust Board. An independent investigator may be commissioned.

If a formal complaint form is received about the Chair, the complaint will be referred to the Vice Chair for investigation. An independent investigator may be commissioned.

NB. Where the Chair of the Trust Board has investigated the complaint, they will write the letter of outcome to the Complainant and provide a copy to the CEO.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the previous stage, the complainant should send the Stage 2 form to info@legethereducationtrust.com asking for the complaint to be heard before a Complaint Panel, within 5 school days. The Trust will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Trust will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Trust will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Trust will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

If the complaint is jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair, or the entire trust board, or the majority of the Trust Board, then Stage 2 will be heard by a completely independent committee panel. The Complaint Panel will consist of three members. None of the three members of the Complaint Panel will have been involved in the incidents or events which led to the complaint, or have been involved in dealing with the complaint in the previous stages, or have any detailed prior knowledge of the complaint.

One of the Complaint Panel members will be independent of the management and running of the Academy Trust.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least 5 school days before the meeting, the Trust will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least 3 school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 2 school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Where there are communication difficulties, the Complaints Panel may use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point. All parties should agree in advance to such a recording, if agreement is not reached then no recording should take place.

Schools are data controllers in their own right and the Complaints Panel therefore will not allow complainants to record meetings, unless it is required for the purposes of a reasonable adjustment. This is because there may be identifiable personal information recorded. Any recording taken without consent from all parties will not form part of the complaint and will be disregarded.

The Complaints Panel will consider, with regard to any recording(s):

- how any decision to allow recording(s) may affect any third parties called to act as witnesses
- the impact and consequences on the individuals involved in the complaint in the event recordings are lost or leaked.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the Trust with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 10 school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the Trust.

If the complaint is jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or the entire governing body or the majority of the governing body, Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the Trust will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

13. Closure Of Complaints

In some cases, it may be determined that a complaint should not progress further if every reasonable action has already been taken to resolve it. A complaint will not move through the formal stages of the policy if the Concern stage has not been fully explored and all reasonable efforts to resolve the issue informally have not been made. It is essential that parents and the school work together during the Concern stage to seek resolution before escalating to a formal complaint.

If a complaint progresses to a formal stage, the Academy will make every reasonable effort to resolve it in line with the procedures outlined in this policy. However, if it is determined that all reasonable actions have been taken to address the issue, the Chair of the Governors may decide that further progression, including moving through Stages 1 and 2, would not contribute to a resolution. Before making this decision, the Chair of the Governors will seek assurances from the school and the Trust that every reasonable effort has been made to resolve the issue at the appropriate stage, and the Trust will be informed of all complaints that are closed.

Additionally, there may be instances where complainants behave in an unreasonable manner when raising or pursuing concerns. In such cases, the school may take action in accordance with Leger Education Trust's 'Complaints (Vexatious) Policy' for dealing with persistent or vexatious complaints. Please refer to the additional policy for further details.

14. Next Steps

If the complainant believes the Trust/Academy did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the Trust/Academy. They will consider whether the Trust/Academy has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus, by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD.

14. Useful Contacts

Campsmount Academy

Ryecroft Road
Norton
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 9AS
Tel: 01302 700002
E-Mail: info@campsmount.com
Headteacher: Miss J Proctor
Website: www.campsmount.com

Spa Academy

Sutton Road
Askern
Nr Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 0AT
Tel: 01302 700332
Headteacher: Mrs K Housley
Email: admin@spaacademyaskern.com
Website: www.spaacademyaskern.com

Moss Road Infant Academy

Moss Road
Askern
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 ONE
Tel: 01302 700287
Email: admin@askernmossroad.com
Executive Headteacher: Mrs C A Turner
Website: www.askernmossroad.com

Littlemoor Infant Academy

Alfred Road
Askern
Nr Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 0PZ
Tel: 01302 701353
Headteacher: Mrs C A Turner
Email: admin@askernlittlemoor.com
Website: www.askernlittlemoor.com

Castle Hills Primary School

Jossey Lane
Scawthorpe
Doncaster
DN5 9ED
Tel: 01302 780246
Headteacher: Mr Neil Harris
Email: admin@castlehillprimary.com
Website: www.castlehillprimary.co.uk/

Barnburgh Primary Academy

Church Lane
Barnburgh
Doncaster
DN5 7EZ
Tel: 01709 893125
Headteacher: Mrs J Potts
Email: admin@barnburghacademy.com
Website: www.barnburghacademy.com

Ridgewood School

Barnsley Road
Scawsby
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN5 7UB
Tel: 01302 783939
Email: [Ridgewood School - Contact Us](#)
Headteacher: Mr A Peirson
Website: www.ridgewoodschool.co.uk

Tornedale Infant Academy

Gattison Ln
New Rossington
Doncaster
DN11 0NQ
Tel: 01302 868387
Email: admin@tornedaleacademy.com
Headteacher: Mrs L Almunshi
Website: www.tornedaleacademy.com

Leger Education Trust

Ryecroft Road

Norton

Doncaster

South Yorkshire

DN6 9AS

Tel: 01302 700002

Email: info@legereducationtrust.com

Website: www.legereducationtrust.com

APPENDIX 1 - STAGE 1 COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete and return to the Academy via your preferred method of communication.
All parts of this form must be completed for your complaint to be considered.

Your name: Pupil's name (if relevant): Your relationship to the pupil:	
Address: Postcode: Contact number: Preferred contact method:	Email (please enter here) _____ Letter <i>*circle your preference</i>
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to the Academy in relation to this.	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signature: Date:	
OFFICE USE	
Date acknowledgement sent:	Sent by:
Complaint referred to [NAME]:	Date:

APPENDIX 2 - STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS FORM

Please complete and return to the Academy via your preferred method of communication.
All parts of this form must be completed for your complaint to be considered.

Your name: Pupil's name (if relevant): Your relationship to the pupil:	
Address: Postcode: Contact number:	
Please give details of which aspects of your original complaint that you feel have not been addressed satisfactorily.	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Signature: Date:	
OFFICE USE	
Date acknowledgement sent:	Sent by:
Complaint referred to [NAME]:	Date:

APPENDIX 3 – FLOW CHART OF COMPLAINTS PROCESS

