



Principles

Insights School & Skills Academy aims to provide outstanding education for all our students. The staff work hard to build positive relationships with all the school's parents and carers, however where there are complaints by parents and carers we are required to have procedures in place.

This policy sets out the procedures that we follow in such cases. If any parent/carer is unhappy with the provision/service that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the student's form tutor immediately after school or over the phone.

Aims

- to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint
- to give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as quickly as possible
- to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding.

In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

When using this Complaints Policy, we aim to:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means with parents and carers wherever possible
- allow swift handling of a complaint within established time-limits for action, keeping all involved informed of progress
- ensure a full and fair consideration of the complaint
- have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved
- respect confidentiality
- address all the complainant's points and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary, and
- provide information to the school's Senior Leadership Team and the Advisory Board, so that services can be improved

This policy is designed to be:

- easily accessible and publicized – a copy of the policy is available on the school's website or on request from the school
- simple to understand and use
- impartial
- non-adversarial



As the parent or carer making the complaint, you are entitled to:

- fair treatment
- courtesy
- a timely response
- accurate advice
- respect for your privacy – complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible allowing for the possibility that we may have to consult with other appropriate parties about your complaint, and
- be given the reasons for our decisions

Who will deal with your complaint?

- At the informal stage your complaint should be raised and dealt with by the form tutor (if appropriate), the Assistant Vice-Principal, Vice-Principal or the Principal.
- If the complaint does not relate to a teacher in the school, but to a member of the non-teaching staff, it should be referred to the Principal.
- If you proceed to the formal part of the process, the Principal will assume overall responsibility for the process, unless the Principal is the subject of the complaint, in which case the Chair of the Advisory Board will assume responsibility. The Chair will make a decision as to whether it is appropriate to conduct a preliminary investigation or whether it is necessary to establish a Complaints Panel to consider and resolve the matter.
- Where the complainant is a member of the Advisory Board, to ensure impartiality, the Board member will play no part in the management or appeal of the complaint as set out in this policy.

Timescales – how long will it take for your complaint to be dealt with?

Every effort will be made by all parties to resolve complaints in a timely manner. The entire procedure, should a complaint proceed to the Appeals Stage, should be dealt with within 40 working days, where possible.

Decisions and outcomes

Where the complaint is upheld we will acknowledge this and address the complaint you have raised. If, after consideration, it is judged that there are no grounds for your complaint, you will be advised accordingly.

The complaints process is non-adversarial and does not provide a role for any other statutory or non-statutory body.



The Complaints Procedure

Informal Stage

- If a parent/carer is concerned about anything to do with the education we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the form tutor, Assistant Vice Principal or the Vice Principal. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. It is the role of form tutors and school staff to ensure that each student is happy at school and is making good progress. The organisation's staff, especially those working directly with children and young people would always want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before it seriously affects the student's progress.
- Where a parent/carer feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the form tutor, Assistant Vice Principal or Vice Principal, or that their concern is of a serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Principal.
- Parents/carers can further discuss the nature of the complaint and how it has been handled so far with the Principal. The Principal will investigate each case thoroughly and most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Formal Stage

- Sometimes it will not be possible for you to have your complaint resolved through the informal process as proposed above, or indeed it might be more appropriate to initiate formal procedures. In this case, you should complete the organisation's Complaints Form and address your complaint for the attention of Mr Phil Orrell, the Chair of the Advisory Board. You should complete the form giving as much information as possible, stating specifically the issue(s) that is (are) of concern to you. It should then be sent to Mr Orrell at info@insightsesc.co.uk

*The Complaints Form can be downloaded from our website or you can request a copy from the Administration team by calling **020 8840 9099**.*

- When you proceed to the formal stage of the process, the Principal will assume responsibility for the process, unless the Principal is the subject of the complaint, in which case the Chair of the Advisory Board will assume responsibility. The Chair will make a decision as to whether it is appropriate to conduct a preliminary investigation or whether it is necessary to establish a Complaints Panel to consider and resolve the matter.



The Complaints Panel

The Chair or the Principal will arrange a hearing before a panel. The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and should consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the Chair to include one person independent of the SLT, the Principal and the running of the school.

A member of staff from the school Administration team, on behalf of the Chair will then acknowledge the complaint in writing and with the Chair of the Advisory Board schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within 20 working days.

If the panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 working days prior to the hearing. The parents or carers may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person who may be a relative or a friend. **Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.** If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Appeal

Where an appeal is requested and a further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 working days of the hearing. The panel will write to the parents or carers informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing to the parents or carers, the Principal, members of the Advisory Board where appropriate and, where relevant, the person who was complained about.

The decision of the panel will be final but should parents or carers still not be satisfied, they can complain directly to the Secretary of State who will look into whether the school handled the complaint properly. In the case of serious misconduct complaints will be referred immediately to the police.

Should any parents have a complaint about the Principal, they are welcome to have an informal meeting with the Principal. Where parents or carers are unhappy with the outcome or the complaint is very serious, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.



Malicious or vexatious complaints

Malicious or vexatious complaints indicate that the complaint may have been fabricated or made with the intention or the effect of causing annoyance or upset to the complainee.

The Advisory Board will take care when considering if the complaint of a parent/carer constituted malicious or vexatious behavior. The Board will seek advice from the LA's DO in order to protect staff and pupils from the potential impact of such actions.

Record Keeping

Written records of complaints are kept securely onsite and the Complaints Log indicates whether they were resolved at the Informal Stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. The school's Administration Team logs all complaints received by the school and a written summary explains how they were resolved. The Advisory Board members examine this log on an annual basis. A record of all correspondence, conversations and meeting concerning your complaint will be kept and these records shall be held confidentially on site and kept apart from student records. All such records of complaints will be destroyed three years after the date of the last correspondence relating to the issue.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

Monitoring and review

The Chair of the Advisory Board oversees the monitoring of the complaints procedure in order to ensure that your complaints are handled properly. The Advisory Board takes into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process and makes any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents and carers so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

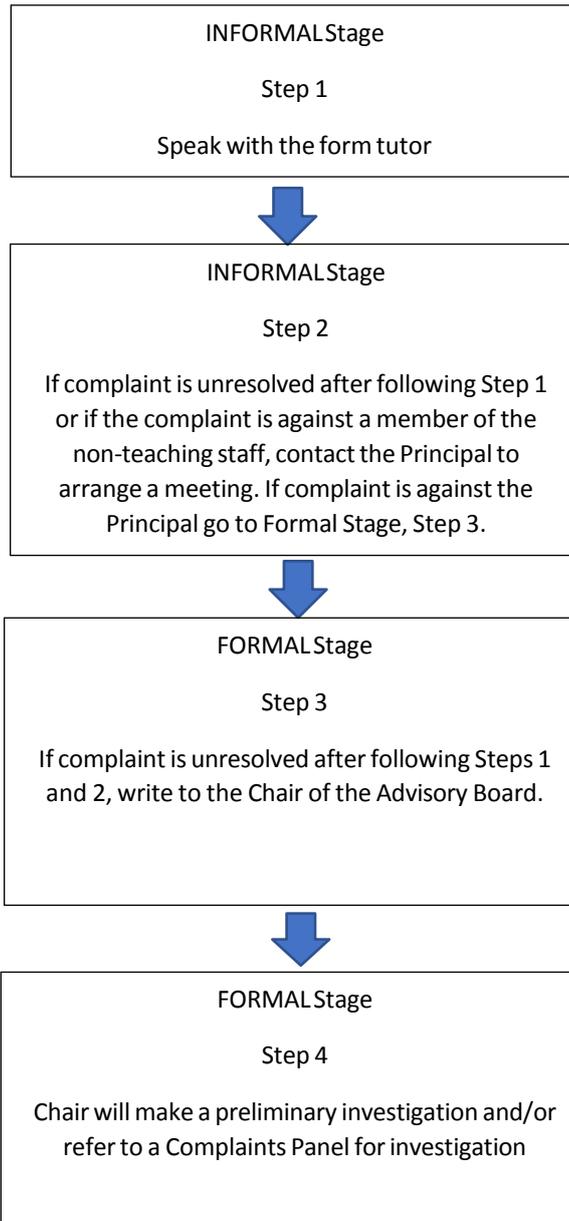
Next review date: September 2019



Insights School Complaints Policy

Annex 1

Complaints Procedure Flow Chart





Insights School Complaints Policy



APPEALS PROCESS

Step 5

If complainant is dissatisfied after step 4, the Chair will make a further investigation.



Step 6

If complainant is dissatisfied after step 5 complainant can complain directly to the Secretary of State



Your name:

Student's name:

Your relationship to the student:

Your address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Email (optional):

Please give the details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (For example, who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?



Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Your Signature:

Date:

For Insights' official use only:

Date acknowledgement sent to complainant:

By who:

Position:

Name of person the complaint was referred to:

Position:

Date complaint referred: