



Anglian Learning

Complaints Procedure: Quick Guide for Parents and the General Public

June 2021

Revision History

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1 April to 25 April 2019	0.1	Trust Leadership Team, PA to the Executive Trust leadership Team and Clerk to the Trust
16 June 2021	2.0	PA to the Executive Trust leadership Team and Clerk to the Trust

Distribution History

Date	Version	Distributed to
	1.0	Trust Leadership Team, Academies Leadership Group, Chair of Governors, Trust Central Team; placed on Anglian Learning website
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Next Review Due

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1. Introduction

Anglian Learning recognises that at times things can go wrong. This brief guidance and the policy which it is linked to will help you understand how to resolve concerns you may have about your child's education.

2. Principles

The following principles apply to our Complaints Policy and Procedure:

- To encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- To be easily accessible, publicised and straightforward to understand;
- To ensure impartiality at all levels and to enable a full and fair investigation;
- To be non-adversarial;
- To enable swift handling within agreed and understood time-limits for action and for keeping people informed of progress;
- To respect people's desire for confidentiality;
- To address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- To provide information to the academy and Trust senior management teams so that services can be improved.

3. Who can complain

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services that a school provides, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as exclusions or admissions). However, anonymous complaints will not be investigated.

4. Dealing with complaints

You should contact the school if you have concerns about a general issue such as:

- Your child's academic progress;
- SEN provision;
- Your child's welfare;
- Bullying;
- Something that has happened in school;

or about wider issues such as:

- The overall running of the school;
- A school policy;
- The management of the school budget;
- The use of school services;
- Health and Safety;
- Services delivered by the school such as adult learning or the sports centre.

It is important to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. The majority of concerns should and can be dealt with without resorting to formal procedures. Concerns about any aspect of the school or a pupil's education or wellbeing should first be raised with an appropriate member of staff; this could be the pupil's class or subject teacher, their form tutor or a member of the senior leadership team at the individual school. Ideally, the member of staff will be able to address the concern on the spot, or can arrange a meeting to discuss the issue. Staff will always seek to resolve issues quickly and without recourse to formal procedures.

5. Which procedure do I need?

Sometimes, when concerns are specific, there are alternative and more appropriate policies for dealing with them. The following list details some specific topics of complaints and the correct policy to refer to. You can access these policies on an individual school's website or ask for a copy from the school's reception.

- Admissions: see the school's admissions policy
- Exclusions: see the school's policy that covers behaviour
- Staff grievances: separate policies exist
- Safeguarding: see the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Wherever a complaint indicates that a child's wellbeing or safety is at risk, the school is under a duty to report this immediately to the local authority. Any action will be taken in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If you are unsure which policy covers the concern you have, please contact the Clerk to the Local Governing Body of the individual school, who will be able to help you. For complaints relating to Anglian Learning rather than an individual school, please contact the Clerk to the Trustees who will be able to advise you.

6. Procedure for raising a complaint

In the first instance, please raise your concern with the relevant member of staff who will be happy to talk to you and seek to find a solution (see above). The formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further. In this instance, complainants must submit their concern in writing to the school.

If you wish to make a complaint, please now refer to the Complaints Policy and Procedure where you can find full details of the different stages involved and the Complaints Form. The policy can be found under 'General Policies' on the Trust website. If there are any aspects of the policy you do not understand, please contact the Clerk to the Governing Body.

7. Complaints that result in staff capability of disciplinary

If at any formal stage of the complaint it is determined that staff disciplinary or capability proceedings are necessary in order to resolve the issue, the details of this action will remain confidential to the Headteacher and / or the individual's line manager. The complainant is entitled to be informed that action is being taken, but

not the eventual outcome of any such action, and they are not entitled to participate in the proceedings or receive any detail about them.

8. Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure the school and the Trust will keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology;
- An explanation;
- An admission that the situation could have been handled better;
- An assurance that the event will not happen again, with steps to be taken;
- An undertaking to review policy in the light of the complaint.

At the same time, following an impartial and thorough investigation, it may also be determined that the school acted appropriately, which the school will explain in detail in order to resolve concerns.