



**Queen Katharine  
Academy**

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## Complaints Policy

### Introduction

This policy document follows guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE) and sets out the staged procedures that the Academy follows if a complaint is made. The legal requirement to have a complaints procedure in place does not in any way undermine efforts to resolve concerns informally. The Academy takes informal concerns seriously and aims to minimise the number of concerns that develop into formal complaints. The Principal has responsibility for the operation and management of the Academy complaints procedure.

The following formal procedures will be used when attempts to resolve an issue informally are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern wishes to take the matter further.

### Stage One: Concerns heard by a staff member

If a parent is concerned about anything they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's form tutor immediately. Most matters can be dealt with in this way. Tutors work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at the Queen Katharine Academy, and is making good progress. They will always want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before a child's progress is affected.

Where possible the Academy will respect the views of a complainant who feels unable to discuss a complaint with a particular member of staff and, in such cases, will refer the complaint to another member of staff. In circumstances where the complaint concerns the Principal the complainant will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

At each stage of the complaints procedure, the person investigating the complaint will make sure that they:

- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- Meet with the complainant or contact them
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right
- Conduct any interview with an open mind
- Keep notes of the interview

Complaints at this stage of the procedure will receive an initial response within 5 working days

### Stage Two: Complaint heard by the Principal

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint has been dealt with at Stage One, the complaint will be referred to the Principal or delegated member of the Senior Leadership team. Complaints at this stage of the procedure will be heard within 10 working days from receipt of the stage 2 complaint.

The Principal or delegated member of the Senior Leadership team will carry out a thorough investigation of all complaints referred at this stage. The decision on the outcomes of the complaint will be made by the Principal. A written response will be sent within 5 working days.

### **Stage Three: Complaint heard by the Local Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel**

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint has been dealt with at Stages One and Two, they must write, giving details of the complaint, to the Chair of the Local Governing Body. The Chair of Governors will then convene a governing body complaints appeal panel hearing to which the complainant will be invited. Complaints at this stage of the procedure will be heard within 20 working days. Complainants will be given 10 days' notice of the date of the appeal hearing.

The Clerk to the Governing Body will

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing;
- record the proceedings;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision.

No governor will sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, governors need to try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of governor and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.

The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the Academy and the complainant.

The panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the Academy's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

Complainants will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of the Panel hearing within 5 working days of the date of the hearing.

### **Stage Four: Complaint heard by the Chair of the Thomas Deacon Education Trust**

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint has been dealt with at Stages One, Two, and three they must write, giving details of the complaint, to the Chair of the Thomas Deacon Education Trust. The Chair will then convene a Trust complaints appeal panel hearing to which the complainant will be invited. The Trust appeal panel is the final stage of the Academy-based procedure. Complaints at this stage of the procedure will be heard within 20 working days. Complainants will be given 10 days' notice of the date of the appeal hearing.

The Clerk to the Trust will

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing;
- record the proceedings;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision.

No Trustee will sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, Trustees need to try and ensure that it is sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.

The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the Academy and the complainant.

The panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the Academy's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

Complainants will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of the Panel hearing within 5 working days of the date of the hearing.

## Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Principal's PA who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

<p>Your name:</p>
<p>Pupil's name:</p>
<p>Your relationship to the pupil:</p>
<p>Address:</p> <p>Postcode:</p> <p>Day time telephone number:</p> <p>Evening telephone number:</p>
<p>Please give details of your complaint.</p>
<p>What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?</p>

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

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

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Official use**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**By who:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**