Engage Enrich Excel Academies

Concerns, Complaints and Resolutions Policy

Date of Approval	Date of Review
09 October 2026	Autumn 2027
HR Committee	HR Committee

Concerns, Complaints and Resolutions Policy

General Principles

1. This policy outlines the school's approach to handling concerns and complaints.

2. We value strong home-school relationships and aim to resolve concerns promptly, fairly and to the satisfaction of all parties. We welcome feedback, both positive and constructive, and use it to review and improve our policies and practices.

3. We keep parents informed through a range of communication channels, including parents' evenings, reports, newsletters and the school website, and regularly seek parental feedback.

4. All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously, respectfully and courteously. In return, we expect concerns to be raised respectfully and not expressed inappropriately, including on social media or in the presence of pupils.

5. Staff, governors and trustees will be familiar with this policy and the school's complaints procedures. The procedures will be reviewed regularly and updated as required. Appropriate training will be provided to staff and governors to support the effective handling of concerns and complaints.

6. Our school is committed to providing the best possible education in an open and supportive environment. We aim to address all concerns fairly, respectfully, promptly and without prejudice.

7. This procedure explains how concerns can be raised and resolved. All staff are familiar with the process and will be happy to help.

Who can make a complaint?

8. This procedure applies to parents, carers and members of the public who wish to raise a concern or complaint about the school's services or provision.

9. Complaints will be handled through this procedure unless they fall under a separate statutory process, such as admissions or exclusions appeals, or are covered by another specific school policy. Further information is provided in Appendix B.

10. **The difference between a concern and a complaint.** A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

11. We encourage concerns to be raised as early as possible, as most issues can be resolved informally without the need for a formal complaint. In the first instance, concerns should be discussed with your child's class teacher, either in person, by telephone or via the school office.

12. All concerns will be treated confidentially. Notes may be taken where appropriate and will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. These records may be used should further investigation be required or if the matter progresses to a formal complaint.

13. Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, or where a formal response is requested, they will be addressed through the stages of this complaints procedure. If necessary, an

alternative member of staff may be asked to handle the matter to ensure it is considered fairly, objectively and impartially.

How to raise a concern or make an Informal complaint

14. A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so. If a third party is involved, we would require the evidence of such consent in writing.

15. Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated under this policy. However, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors may refer an anonymous complaint to the Trust, which will determine whether the nature of the complaint warrants further investigation.

16. Audio or video recordings will only be considered where informed consent has been obtained from all parties. In line with DfE guidance, covert recordings made without the consent of those involved will not normally be accepted as evidence, except in exceptional circumstances.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

17. We encourage complainants to submit correspondence that is clear, concise and accurately reflects their concerns. While artificial intelligence (AI) tools may be used to assist in drafting communications, complainants remain responsible for ensuring that all information submitted is accurate, relevant and reflects their genuine concerns.

18. AI-generated content may contain inaccuracies, include irrelevant information or result in complaints that are unnecessarily lengthy or difficult to understand.

19. Complainants are reminded that publicly available AI platforms and chatbots may not be confidential. Personal, sensitive or confidential information relating to pupils, staff, parents or other individuals should not be uploaded to such services unless appropriate safeguards are in place and data protection requirements are met.

20. The school will consider all complaints fairly and impartially. The school may request clarification or a concise summary before progressing the complaint.

21. Where clarification, further information or a concise summary is required to enable the school to understand and investigate the complaint, the complaints process may be paused until this information is provided.

Concerns and Informal Complaints

22. If you need to raise a concern or make an informal complaint, please contact the most appropriate member of staff in the first instance. Most issues can be resolved quickly through discussion and by working together to find a solution.

- **Educational or pastoral concerns:** Contact your child's class teacher first before requesting a meeting with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- **Behaviour or disciplinary concerns:** Contact the class teacher before requesting a meeting with the Headteacher or a member of the SLT.
- **Financial or administrative matters:** Contact the School Business Manager.
- **Concerns about a staff member's conduct:** Raise the matter with the staff member directly where appropriate. If this is unsuitable or does not resolve the issue, contact the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.

23. All members of the Senior Leadership Team are available to help resolve concerns before they become formal complaints. We aim to acknowledge concerns within five school days and, where possible, resolve them informally within 15 school days from receipt of the concern. School contact details can be found in Appendix A.

24. Concerns about the Headteacher should be raised directly with the Headteacher in the first instance. Where this is not appropriate, concerns may be raised with the Chair of Governors. Concerns about a governor should be directed to the Governance professional to the Local Advisory Committee. Where informal resolution is unsuccessful, the formal complaints procedure will apply.

25. In exceptional circumstances, the Local Advisory Committee may appoint an independent investigator and seek advice from the Trust CEO or Trust Board.

26. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may submit a formal complaint using the procedure set out below.

Formal complaints

27. Formal complaints should follow the procedure set out in this policy. To ensure fairness, complainants should not raise complaints directly with individual governors, as this may prevent them from being involved at a later stage.

28. Please address complaints as follows:

- **About a member of staff (other than the Headteacher):** Write to the Headteacher via the school office, marked *Private and Confidential*.
- **About the Headteacher**: Write to the Chair of Governors via the school office, marked *Private and Confidential*.
- **About a governor or the Local Advisory Committee:** Write to the Governance professional to the Local Advisory Committee via the school office, marked *Private and Confidential*.
- **About the CEO, a trustee or the Trust:** Write to the Governance professional to the Trust Board via the Trust office, marked *Private and Confidential*.

29. A complaint form is available in Appendix C and on the school website. If you need help completing the form, please contact the school office or seek support from an organisation such as Citizens Advice. School contact details can be found in Appendix A.

30. We will make reasonable adjustments where needed to ensure everyone can access this procedure, including providing information in alternative formats, assistance with completing forms, or arranging meetings in accessible locations.

Time scales

31. We aim to meet the timescales set out in this procedure. Where this is not possible, we will keep the complainant informed and agree a revised timeframe.

32. Complaints should normally be made within three months of the incident, or within three months of the last incident in a series of related events. Complaints made outside this period may still be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as where new evidence has emerged, the matter is particularly serious, or there is a valid reason for the delay.

33. For the purposes of this procedure, a school day is any weekday when the school is open, excluding weekends, school holidays and INSET days.

34. Complaints received during school holidays or outside term time will be treated as having been received on the first school day after the holiday period. Timescales for handling the complaint will begin from that date.

35. There may be occasions when it is necessary to depart from the published complaints procedure. In such cases, the complainant will be informed of the reasons for the deviation and kept updated throughout the process.

Safeguarding

36. If a complaint raises concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, the school will act in line with our safeguarding procedures and report this immediately to the appropriate safeguarding authorities and act in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy, available on the school website or from the school office.

Social Media

37. Complaints are handled confidentially. To help ensure a fair and timely resolution, we ask that complaints are not discussed publicly, including on social media.

Complaints Involving Staff Procedures

38. If a complaint leads to staff disciplinary or capability procedures, these will remain confidential. The complainant will be informed that the matter is being addressed appropriately but will not be involved in, or receive details of, any proceedings or outcomes.

Resolving complaints

39. At each stage in the procedure, we aim to resolve the complaint. Dependent on the circumstances, we will acknowledge if 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.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

40. The complainant can withdraw the complaint at any stage of the process. If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

Retention

41. Complaint records will be stored securely and confidentially, separate from staff and pupil records, and retained for six years in accordance with IRMS guidance, the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Complainants will be informed of this arrangement.

Unreasonable complaints and serial persistent complaints

42. The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will act to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

43. The school defines serial and unreasonable complainants as ‘those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people’s complaints’.

44. A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint: -

    - refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
    - refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
    - refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
    - insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
    - introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be considered and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales;
    - makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
    - changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
    - repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
    - refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school’s complaints procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
    - seeks an unrealistic outcome;
    - makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and challenging contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

45. A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically: -
    - maliciously;
    - aggressively;
    - using threats, intimidation or violence;
    - using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
    - knowing it to be false;
    - using falsified information;
    - publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media, websites, WhatsApp, AI platforms and newspapers.

46. Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

47. Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an ‘unreasonable’ judgement.

48. If the behaviour continues the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that his/her behaviour is unreasonable and asking him/her to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the school causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

49. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include barring an individual from the school site to ensure the well-being of others.

Procedure for managing a number of complaints of a similar nature

50. Where a school and/or the Trust receives multiple complaints on the same matter from individuals connected or unconnected to the school, the Trust may respond through a published statement and/or standard response while continuing to consider any individual issues raised.

Barring from the School Premises

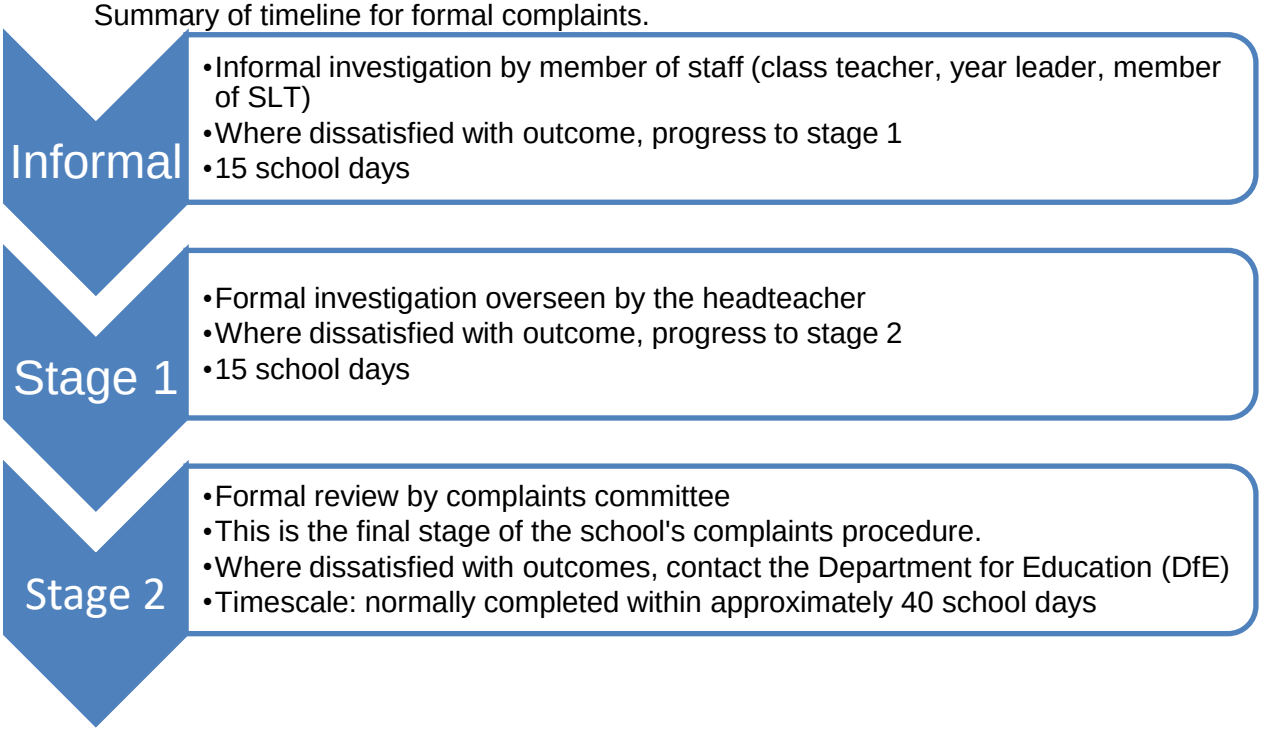
51. Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Local Advisory Committees have a responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of pupils and staff, and will therefore act to ensure that schools remain a safe place.

52. If a complainant's behaviour is a cause for concern, a school can ask him/her to leave school premises. In serious cases, the Headteacher or the School Trust can notify them in writing that their implied permission to be on school premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. Schools should always give the complainant the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing.

53. The decision to bar should then be reviewed by the Trust's Audit and Risk Committee, considering any representations made by the complainant, and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the complainant should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place. Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department of Education. Once the school's own complaints procedure has been completed, the only remaining avenue of appeal is through the Courts; independent legal advice must therefore be sought.

Formal complaints

54. We follow a 2-stage formal complaint process, and each stage is explained further below: Summary of timeline for formal complaints.



Stage 1 – formal procedure

55. In most circumstances formal complaints must be made to the headteacher via the school office. This must be in writing (there is a stage 1 complaint form in Appendix C) or by telephone. Complaints will not be progressed without the completion of the required Complaint Form.

56. The date on which the complaint is received will be recorded, and the complaint will be acknowledged in writing (either by letter or email) within five school days. The headteacher may appoint a member of the school's leadership team or a colleague working elsewhere in the Trust to investigate and, in some exceptional cases, an investigator may be appointed from outside the school or the Trust. Where an investigator is appointed, the headteacher retains responsibility to decide on the school's response to the complaint.

57. It is likely that the headteacher or investigator will ask to meet you face to face to discuss the matter, clarifying the nature of the complaint, what remains unresolved and what outcome you would like to see. At the meeting, your concerns will be discussed, and resolution will be sought.

58. If agreement can be reached at that point on a way forward which is satisfactory to all parties, this will be confirmed in writing following the meeting and the stage 1 complaint will be closed. If the issues are not resolved by the end of the meeting, the headteacher/investigator will then commence a full investigation.

59. The headteacher (or investigator) will consider all relevant evidence. This may include but is not limited to:

    - A statement from the complainant
    - Where relevant a meeting with/statement from those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
    - Any previous correspondence regarding the complaint
    - Any supporting documents
    - Interviews with and/or statements from anyone related to the complaint
    - Any other applicable evidence.

60. At the conclusion of the investigation, the headteacher will provide a formal written response within 15 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint. A written record will be kept of any meetings/interviews in relation to the investigation.

61. If the headteacher is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide you with an update and a revised response date.

62. 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 school will take to resolve the complaint.

63. The headteacher will provide you with details of how to escalate your complaint if you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 1.

Complaints about the headteacher or the governors

64. If your complaint concerns the headteacher, you should first directly approach the headteacher to attempt to resolve the issue informally. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, or you have good reason to feel it is inappropriate to approach the headteacher in the first instance, you should use the stage 1 formal complaint form found in Appendix C to contact the chair of governors via the school office. Please mark the communication as

Private and Confidential. A stage 1 formal investigation will be undertaken, led by a nominated governor as set out below.

65. If your complaint concerns a governor, you should use the stage 1 formal complaint form found in Appendix C to approach the governance professional to the Local Advisory Committee via the school office. Please mark the communication as Private and Confidential. An informal resolution will be sought, but where this fails, a stage 1 formal investigation will be undertaken led by the chair of governors or a nominated governor.

66. If you believe your complaint concerns the chair of governors, the chair and vice-chair jointly, the entire Local Advisory Committee or the majority of the Local Advisory Committee the matter will be escalated to the CEO of the Trust who will determine whether it should be heard at the school or Trust level.

67. The chair of governors, the nominated governor or the CEO of the Trust may appoint an investigator from elsewhere within the Trust or from outside the Trust. Where an investigator is appointed, the chair of governors, nominated governor or the CEO of the Trust retains responsibility to decide on the response to the complaint.

68. If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, then you may progress to stage 2 of this procedure, using the template stage 2 complaints form found in Appendix D of this policy.

Stage 2

69. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome at stage 1 and wish to take the matter further, you can escalate the complaint to stage 2 – a meeting of members of the Local Advisory Committee's complaints committee. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

70. Your request to escalate to stage 2 must be made to the governance professional using the stage 2 formal complaint form (Appendix D), via the school office, within 10 school days of you receiving the school's response to the stage 1 complaint. Requests received outside this timeframe will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

71. The complaints committee will consist of panel members who have had no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. At least one member of the complaints committee will be independent of the management and running of the school. They will be suitably skilled and able to demonstrate their independence.

72. Prior to the meeting, the committee will decide amongst themselves who will act as the chair of the complaints committee. If there are fewer than two governors from the school available, the governance professional will source any additional governors through another Trust school.

73. The following steps will be taken:

i. The governance professional to the complaints committee will write to you within 5 school days to confirm receipt of the stage 2 formal complaint form and detail further action to be taken. The governance professional will request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee.

ii. The complaints committee will meet within 30 school days of receipt of the request for the stage 2 complaint review. If the first identified date is not convenient for you, they will offer up to two further dates. If these all fail to be suitable or you cancel or do not attend the meeting at the last minute for whatever reason, then the committee may opt to conduct the complaint review meeting in private, without either the school or the complainant being represented. Their considerations will be based on the documentary evidence previously provided by both parties to ensure that the matter is resolved as soon as possible in the best

interests of all parties. They may ask for a representative from, or appointed by, the Trust to be present for procedural advice.

iii. The complaints committee will invite the following parties, where applicable:

- You
- The person responding to the stage 1 complaint (headteacher, chair of governors, nominated governor, CEO)
- The investigator if one was appointed
- Relevant witnesses
- A representative from, or appointed by, the Trust for procedural advice only.

iv. You may ask to bring someone to the meeting with you to provide support. This can be a friend or relative. It is inadvisable for this person to be a member of the school community for reasons of confidentiality and to avoid conflict of interest. You should let the governance professional know the name and role of this supportive companion prior to the hearing, and the governance professional will seek agreement from the chair of the committee. The supportive companion is not there as a witness, so does not address the complaints committee.

v. Generally, neither you nor the school would bring legal representatives to the meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate, for example, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation. If you wish to be accompanied by someone who is legally qualified you must notify the governance professional of this at least 5 school days prior to the meeting. Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

vi. If the attendance of any pupils is required at the hearing, parental permission will be sought if the pupil is under the age of 18. Extra care will be taken to consider the vulnerability of children where they are present at a complaints hearing.

vii. All relevant documentation to be considered by the committee will be distributed to both parties 5 school days in advance of the meeting. Any submissions of additional materials must be submitted before the documents are distributed 5 days before the meeting.

viii. The complaints committee can make the following decisions:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.

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

- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not reoccur.

x. The chair of committee will provide you and the school with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it in writing within 10 school days of the hearing. This letter will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if you are dissatisfied with the way your complaint has been handled by the school. Where relevant, the findings and recommendations will also be sent to the person complained about.

74. The governance professional to the complaints committee will record the proceedings in the form of notes and will circulate these and the outcome of the meeting. The notes are a summary of the discussion at the hearing and the decision of the complaints committee following the hearing but will not include the deliberations of the committee. The notes are the property of the Trust, delegated to the Local Advisory Committee.

75. This is the final stage at which the school will consider the complaint. If you remain dissatisfied and wish to take the complaint further, you must refer the matter to the Department for Education.

Complaints About the Trust, CEO, Central Team or Trustees

76. Where a complaint relates to the Trust, the CEO, a member of the Central Team, a Trustee or the Trust Board, the Trust will follow the same principles, timescales and stages set out in this Complaints Procedure. References to the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Complaints Committee should be read as the equivalent Trust role identified below.

Informal Resolution

77. Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised informally with the relevant Trust leader or member of the Central Team. The Trust will seek to resolve concerns promptly and without the need for a formal complaint wherever possible. Where informal resolution is not appropriate or has been unsuccessful, the formal complaints procedure will apply.

Stage 1: Formal Investigation

78. Formal complaints about the Trust, CEO, a member of the Central Team or a Trustee should be submitted in writing to the Governance professional to the Trust Board via the Trust Office and marked *Private and Confidential*.

79. The Governance professional to the Trust Board will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five school days and arrange for the complaint to be investigated by an appropriate person who has had no prior involvement in the matter. This may include:

    - The CEO, where the complaint concerns a member of the Central Team.
    - The Chair of the Trust Board, where the complaint concerns the CEO or a Trustee.
    - A nominated Trustee or independent investigator, where appropriate.

80. The investigator will establish the facts, consider all relevant evidence and provide a written outcome within 15 school days of receipt of the complaint wherever possible. The response will explain the findings, decision and any actions to be taken. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a Stage 2 review.

Stage 2: Trust Complaints Panel

81. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they may request a review by a Trust Complaints Panel within 10 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response.

82. The Trust Complaints Panel will constitute the final stage of the Trust's internal complaints procedure. The panel will comprise three individuals who have had no prior involvement in the complaint. At least one panel member will be independent of the management and running of the Trust.

83. The Panel will review:

    - The original complaint.
    - The Stage 1 investigation and findings.
    - Any evidence previously submitted.
    - The complainant's reasons for remaining dissatisfied.

84. The Panel may:

    - Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
- Recommend actions or changes to Trust policies, systems or procedures.

85. The Panel's decision will be provided in writing within 10 school days of the hearing and will include the reasons for its decision.

Complaints About the Chair of the Trust Board or Trust Board

86. Where a complaint concerns the Chair of the Trust Board, the matter will be managed by a Trustee nominated by the Trust Board who has had no prior involvement in the complaint.

87. Where a complaint concerns the entire Trust Board, the majority of Trustees, or both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the complaint will be heard by a wholly independent panel appointed by the Trust.

Referral of complaint to Department for Education (DfE)

88. We anticipate that the majority of concerns/complaints will be resolved at the informal stage with only a few progressing to the formal stage. The panel hearing stage should only be necessary in exceptional circumstances.

89. Once the complaints process is concluded (or a complaint has been terminated due to undue delay or failure to lodge a request for a Stage 2 Complaints Panel Meeting within the time stated in the policy) the matter is closed. If the Complainant is still not satisfied, then they may contact the Department for Education (DfE). There is an online procedure at: https://www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe

90. The Complainant may also write to the DfE at:

    Ministerial and Public Communication Division
    Department for Education
    2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate
    Manchester M1 2WD

    The DfE will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the trust/school/college. They will only investigate whether the complaint was handled properly and in accordance with education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

    If after the completion of the complaints process, you believe the school/nursery is not meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, you are entitled to contact Ofsted: email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or call 0300 123 4666.

91. Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant	To help achieve a timely and effective resolution, complainants should: • Clearly explain their concerns as early as possible. • Work cooperatively with the school to resolve the issue. • Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings. • Treat all parties with respect and maintain confidentiality. • Avoid discussing complaints on social media.
Complaint Investigator	The investigator is responsible for conducting a fair, impartial and thorough investigation by: • Gathering and reviewing relevant evidence, records and information.

	• Meeting with or obtaining statements from those involved where appropriate. • Keeping accurate records of the investigation. • Maintaining confidentiality and adhering to agreed timescales. • Providing a clear report summarising findings, conclusions and any recommended actions.
Governance Professional	The Governance Professional will: • Act as the main point of contact for the complaints process. • Arrange meetings and manage correspondence. • Circulate relevant documentation. • Keep an accurate record of proceedings. • Communicate decisions and outcomes to all parties.
Complaints Committee Chair	The Chair will: • Ensure the hearing is conducted fairly, respectfully and impartially. • Explain the purpose and scope of the panel. • Ensure all parties have a reasonable opportunity to present their views • Maintain focus on the issues raised and support clear decision-making. • Work with the Governance professional to ensure proceedings are properly recorded.
Complaints Committee Members	Committee members will: • Act independently, impartially and without prior involvement in the complaint. • Review all relevant documentation in advance. • Consider the evidence objectively and reach decisions based on the facts. • Treat all participants with sensitivity and respect. • Ensure the welfare of any child involved remains paramount.

Appendix A: School / Academy contact details

Westfield Primary School
Bonsey Lane
Woking
Surrey
GU22 9PR

Tel: 01483 764187

Email: info@westfield.surrey.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Karyn Hing
Email: info@westfield.surrey.sch.uk

Chair of Governors
Email: chair@westfield.surrey.sch.uk

Governance Professional to the Local Advisory Committee: Ms Kate Woodhouse
Email: clerktodirectors@eeea.co.uk

Chief Executive Officer - Engage Enrich Excel Academies

Mr David Harris

Contact through the Governance Professional to the Local Advisory Committee or info@eeea.co.uk.

Engage Enrich Excel Academies
Central Office
181 Frimley Road
South Camberley Primary & Nursery Junior Site
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 2QB

Governance Professional to the Trust Board: Ms Kate Woodhouse
Email: clerktodirectors@eeea.co.uk

Appendix B

Which procedure do I need?

Some complaints will be dealt with through different policies or procedures, particularly those that link to other statutory procedures. The list below contains some of these, with the contact information or policies to refer to. You may ask for a copy of any of the policies listed from the school office.

- **Child protection/safeguarding** - 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 taken will be in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy which can be found on the school website or is available from the school office. If at any time a child protection concern becomes apparent, the child protection and safeguarding policy takes precedence over the complaints process, which will be halted until the child protection matter is resolved.

  Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.

  - Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures apply (https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/local-offer)

  - Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures apply (www.hampshirescp.org.uk)

  - If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the county council direct:

  - Surrey County Council (SCC) Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA) (0300 470 9100)
  - Hampshire Children's Services (0300 555 1384)

- **School admissions** - Please refer to the school's admissions policy or contact:

  - Surrey County Council, Admissions Team, https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions
  - Hampshire County Council Admissions Team, https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/

- **Statutory assessment of special educational needs**. Please refer to the

  - Surrey County Council Local Offer website (https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/home.page)

  - Hampshire County Council Local Offer website (https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/localoffer.page)

- **Exclusion of children from school** - Further information on raising concerns about exclusions can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions and in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bulling policies.

  Complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through this policy.

- **Whistleblowing** – Engage Enrich Excel Academies has a whistleblowing policy for all employees, including temporary staff and contractors (www.eeea.co.uk).

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 directly with their employer. Referrals can be made at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/blowing-the-whistle-to-the-department-for-education.

- **Staff grievance** - Complaints from staff will be dealt with internally following Engage Enrich Excel Academies grievance policy ((www.eeea.co.uk).

- **Staff conduct** - Complaints about staff will be dealt with, if appropriate, internally following Engage Enrich Excel Academies disciplinary and appraisal and capability policies (www.eeea.co.uk).

- **Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities** - Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them directly. However, if the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when a third-party provider was using school premises, the school will follow the procedures set out in its allegations of abuse policy including informing the LADO.

- **Subject access requests and freedom of information requests** - Please see Engage Enrich Excel Academies data protection and freedom of information policies (www.eeea.co.uk).

For complaints regarding discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, the complaints procedure applies but the complainant has a further right of appeal to SENDIST (Special Educational Needs and Disability First Tier Tribunal) for complaints about disability discrimination or to the county court for all other unresolved disputes regarding protected characteristics.

Appendix C: Stage 1 Formal Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the headteacher via the school office.

If your complaint is about the headteacher or an individual governor, please return to the chair of governors via the school office.

If your complaint is about the chair of governors or the Local Advisory Committee, please return to the CEO via the governance professional to the Local Advisory Committee.

Name	
Name of pupils, year group and your relationship to them (where applicable)	
Address	
Telephone (Day)	
Telephone (Mobile)	
Email address:	
Name	
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at school about it.	
Please let us know what actions you have taken to try to resolve your complaint (who have you spoken to at the school about it and what was the response)?	

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Please give details of any paperwork you are attaching

Signed:	
Date:	

Official use

Date received:	Signed:
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	

Appendix D: Stage 2 Formal Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the governance professional to the Local Advisory Committee via the school office.

Name	
Name of pupils, year group and your relationship to them (where applicable)	
Address	
Telephone (Day)	
Telephone (Mobile)	
Email address:	
Name	

Please give details of why you wish to take your complaint further and escalate the complaint to stage 2. Please give:

- Reasons why you feel your concerns have not been fully addressed
- Any evidence that you feel has not been fully considered, and,
- Which elements of your complaint remain unresolved from stage 1

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

Please give details of any paperwork you are attaching

Signed:	
Date:	

Official use

Date received:	Signed:
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	