



COMPLAINTS POLICY

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Introduction

The Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, students, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our six 'Es' as follows:

- Ethical – 'Doing the right thing'
- Excellence – 'Outstanding quality'
- Equity – 'Fairness and social justice'
- Empathy – 'Caring for others'
- Evolution – 'Continuous change'
- Endurance – 'Working hard and not giving up'

This policy is based on the value of 'Empathy'
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The Trust strives to ensure that everyone treats each other with respect, responsibility and builds positive relationships. If harm is done, then the relationship is restored.

Related policies

This Equality and Diversity Policy is consistent with all Trust policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

How this policy links to other guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance on school complaints procedures.

Public Enquiries 0870 000 2288, <http://www.education.gov.uk>

Policy Statement

We always aim to maintain positive relationships with parents and carers and do our best to address any concerns as soon as they arise. However, we are aware that in some instances a parent/carer may wish to make a complaint.

1. We value good home/academy relations within the Trust and will, therefore, do everything we can to establish and maintain them. This includes seeking to resolve any concerns or complaints promptly, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
2. We welcome feedback on what parents/carers feel we do well, or not so well, within the Trust Community. We will consider carefully all feedback, whether positive or negative, and will review our policies and practices accordingly.

3. We will treat all concerns and complaints seriously and courteously and will advise parents/carers and others of the Trust's procedures for dealing with their concerns. In return, we expect parents and other complainants to behave respectfully towards all members of the Trust Community. In particular, any disagreement with the Trust should not be expressed inappropriately or in front of pupils.
4. All members of the Trust Community will receive/have access to a copy of this policy statement and staff, trustees and governors will be familiar with the Trust's procedures for dealing with parental concerns and complaints, to which they will have access as required. This policy is available on request to parents/carers.
5. The Trust's procedures will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.
6. Staff, trustees and governors will receive training in handling parental concerns and complaints as appropriate. This may be on an individual basis, or as a group activity for all staff, or for specific groups, such as the office staff or members of the governing body.
7. Whilst we will seek to resolve concerns and complaints to the satisfaction of all parties, it may not be possible to achieve this in every case. We will, therefore, use our option to close a complaint before all the stages of the Trust's procedures have been exhausted, if this appears to be appropriate.
8. The government and Cornwall Local Authority advocate resolution of parental concerns and complaints at the academy.

Each academy within the Trust welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, about how it is doing. Where someone has a concern or complaint, each academy will endeavor at all times to deal with the issues responsively and reasonably and if necessary put things right as quickly as possible.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- be impartial and non adversarial;
- facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary;
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response;
- respect complainants' desire for confidentiality;
- treat complainants with respect;
- keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process; and
- consider how the complaint can feed into academy improvement evaluation processes.

We aim to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The academy will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the Trust's website and the websites of its member academies.

Complaints will be treated confidentially with written records being securely retained. A written record will be kept of all complaints made, together with details of whether they were resolved following the formal procedure or progressed to a panel hearing.

The Trust will record all action taken as a result of the complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a clear, logical and unambiguous process is set out, both for those who have a genuine grievance to raise or for those staff who may have had a complaint made

against them. This policy will specify the three stages of action whereby any complaints can be dealt with:

- Stage 1. Informally
 - Stage 2. Through a formal process via the Principal
 - Stage 3. Through a panel hearing
- The aim of the policy is to:

- ensure concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits;
- provide effective responses and appropriate redress;
- maintain good working relationships between all people involved with the Trust;
- respect complainants' desire for confidentiality

Policy Procedures

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children or young people that are registered at any academy within the Trust. Any person, including members of the public may make a complaint to 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 and admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

In the event a complaint concerns the well-being or safety of a child, schools have a duty to report this to the Local Authority and any action taken will be in accordance with the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which is available on all websites across the Trust).

If it is determined that staff disciplinary or capability proceedings are required to resolve an issue, the complainant will only be informed that action is being taken and the outcome of any such action. The complainant will not be entitled to participate and the details of the proceedings will remain confidential to the Principal and/or the individual's line manager.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. The Trust takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Principal will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Principal will refer you to another member of staff. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, the Principal will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

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.

Concerns should be raised with either the form tutor or Principal. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual trustees/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 Principal) should be made in the first instance to the Principal via the school office. Please mark them as 'Private and Confidential'.

Complaints about the Principal/Headteacher or COO of the Trust should be made to the CEO via the Trust central office.

Complaints about the CEO should be made to the Chair of the Trust Board.

Complaints about the Chair of the Trust Board/Chair of the Governing Body any individual trustee/governor or the whole Trust Board/Governing Body should be addressed to the Clerk to the Trust Board/Clerk to the Governing Body via the school office. Please mark them as 'Private and Confidential'.

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

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Principal or Chair of the Trust Board/Chair of the Governing Body, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

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 timeframe if exceptional.

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.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by the Trust 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	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Statutory assessments of Special Educational NeedsSchool re-organisation proposals	or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Cornwall Council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO), who has responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusion of children from school* 	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at www.gov.uk/school-disciplineexclusions/exclusions</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behavior policy can be made through the academy's complaints procedure.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing 	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the Trust's/Academy's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the Local Authority or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff grievances 	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the Trust's/academy's internal grievance procedures.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff conduct 	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the Trust's/academy's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint.</p>
	<p>However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use academy premises or facilities 	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.</p>

• National Curriculum – content	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus
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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 <School Name> 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.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, <School Name> 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 about 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 academy policies in light of the complaint
- An apology

Withdrawal of a Complaint

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

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

Many enquiries and concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily by the Form Tutor, Head of School or other members of staff, without the need to resort to a formal procedure. The Leading Edge Academies Partnership values informal meetings and discussions.

Whilst there is no suggested timescale for resolution at this stage, given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion, if a face-to-face discussion seems unlikely to resolve matters, it will be necessary to progress the next stage of the procedure.

It is important to note that any complaint relating to a diversity issue will also be recorded on the Diversity Incident Report Form.

Stage 2 – Formal complaints

Formal complaints must be made to the Principal (unless they are about the Principal), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone.

The Principal will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 14 school days.

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

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

During the investigation, the Principal (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 Principal will provide a formal written response within 14 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Principal 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 Ludgvan School will take to resolve the complaint.

The Principal 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 Principal, or a member of the trust board, governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled trustee/governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

Complaints about the Principal or member of the trust board/governing body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

If the complaint is: jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or the entire trust board/governing body or the majority of the trust board/governing body, Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the trust board/governing body. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

Stage 3 – Panel hearing

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 3 – a meeting with members of the trust board's/governing body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, trustees/governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within 7 school days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.

The Clerk 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 Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 14 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk 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 Ludgvan School available, the Clerk will source any additional, independent governors through another local school or through their LA's

Governor Services team, 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. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, 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.

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 7 school days before the meeting, the Clerk 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 5 school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 7 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. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

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 academy's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and Ludgvan School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within <insert number> 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 Ludgvan School.

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 Ludgvan School will take to resolve the complaint.

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

Next Steps

If the complainant believes the 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 3.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by Ludgvan School. They will consider whether Ludgvan School 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

Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
 - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
 - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
 - consideration of records and other relevant information
 - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right. The investigator should:
- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond

- prepare a comprehensive report for the headteacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The headteacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator (this could be the Principal/designated complaints trustee/governor or other staff member providing administrative support) The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, headteacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure be aware of issues regarding:
 - sharing third party information
 - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person
- keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made

- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one)

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial and should be seen to be so (no governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it)
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. We recognise that the complainant may not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations
- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting.
 - Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated
 - the committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults
 - if the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.
- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount

Monitoring and Evaluation

At all formal stages of the complaints procedure, the following information should be recorded:

- The name of the complainant;
- The date and time at which complaint was made;
- The details of the complaint;
- The desired outcome of the complainant;
- How the complaint is investigated (including written records of interviews held);
- Results and conclusions of investigations;
- Any action taken; and
- The complainant's response (satisfaction or further pursuit of complaint).

The Trust may choose to appoint a member of staff as a 'Complaints Coordinator'. In such cases, the Complaints Coordinator will have responsibility for the operation and management of the Trust's complaints policy and will be responsible for monitoring complaints. Records should be retained for a period of three years.

It is the responsibility of the CEO and Board of Trustees to ensure that the procedures outlined above are closely followed and a review of these procedures should be made in the light of any formal action to ensure that any parties involved feel confident that they have been fairly represented.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is vital. All conversations and correspondence will be treated with discretion. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential, except in so far as is required of the Academy by the Complainants have the right to know what use will be made of personal information and, accordingly, personal information will only be shared between staff on a 'need to know' basis.

Impact of Policy

This policy has set out clear routes and guidelines for all stakeholders who wish to make a complaint about staff or procedures at the Leading Edge Academies Partnership. This will ensure that correct procedures are followed by all concerned and those facing a possible complaint understand their rights and responsibilities during any investigation.

Appendix 1 – Complaints Form

Please complete and return to the Principal/Chair of the Trust Board/Chair of Governors as appropriate, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:	
Pupil's name (if applicable):	
Your relationship to the pupil (if applicable):	
Address:	
Daytime telephone number:*	
Evening telephone number:*	
Email address:*	
<i>*Please indicate preferred contact option</i>	

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you taken already to try to resolve your complaint? 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 supporting paperwork? If so, please give details.

If it has been more than three months since the incident, please explain the delay in making your complaint.	
Signature:	
Date:	

<i>For official use only</i>	
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	

Appendix 2 – Guidance on complaints regarding staff

A member of staff who is the subject of a complaint would normally be advised of the situation immediately. However, if the complaint involves a child protection issue, child protection arrangements will come into force involving Social Services and Police.

The following procedure will be followed to investigate complaints about the conduct of members of staff.

- I. If at any time during the investigation there is a prima facie case for disciplinary action, the Leading Edge Academies Partnership disciplinary procedure must be followed and no further action taken under the complaints procedure. This also applies where child protection procedures are being followed.
- II. It may be advisable to meet with the complainant, before the investigation, in order to clarify the precise nature of the complaint and to discuss ways in which the matter might be resolved.
- III. If a formal investigation is required, then the Leading Edge Academies Partnership will adhere to the following principles:-
 - a) If a member of staff is the subject of a complaint, s/he will be given a copy and advised to contact their trade union or professional association for advice and support.
 - b) The member of staff will be advised that a 'friend' or trade union representative may accompany him/her at any subsequent interview or hearing.
 - c) The complaint will be treated as an allegation only, during the investigation stage.
 - d) The CEO will invite all parties, (including witnesses), to provide written statements as part of the investigation.

Additional guidance on Formal Complaints about the Principal or a Trustee/Governor

Formal complaints about a Head of School, CEO or a Trustee will be referred directly to the Chair of the Trust Board. The Chair of Trust Board should acknowledge the written complaint in writing within 10 Academy days. The letter may include brief details of the terms of the investigation and the role of the Trustees in resolving the complaint.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Chair of the Trust Board may need to interview the Principal/Trustee and obtain witness statements. Once the chair has completed the investigation, a written response will need to be sent to the complainant outlining briefly the results of the investigation and the course of action taken by the Chair of the Trust Board. The letter should also indicate the next stage in the process if the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome.