

# Open Academy

## Parental Guidance and Complaints Policy

<b>Policy Type:</b>	<b>Academy Policy</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Local Governing Body</b>
<b>Date Approved by LGB:</b>	<b>12/12/2019</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>December 2022</b>
<b>Person Responsible:</b>	<b>Principal</b>

## Summary of Changes

The policy has been amended as follows.

[illegible]

## **General Policy Roles and Accountabilities**

The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) is accountable for all policies across its Academies. All policies, whether relating to an individual Academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our ethos and values as articulated in our prospectus. We are committed to the provision of high-quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured, and talents released.

A Scheme of Delegation for each Academy sets out the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body and Principal. The Principal of each Academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Academy Trust.

All employees of the Academy Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

## **Complaints Policy**

### **1. Introductory statement**

The core values and ethos of the Academy are central to our Complaints Policy. We are committed to ensuring the highest levels of communication and partnership with our parents through the House System, publications, regular opportunities for face-to-face communication and our Home-Academy Agreement.

### **2. Aims of the policy**

The aims of the policy are to ensure that parents are fully aware of the Academy's expectations of them and of the relationship we wish to maintain with them.

### **3. Summary of expectations of relevant stakeholders / roles and responsibilities**

Parents will:

- Abide by the Home-Academy Agreement
- Engage in dialogue with Academy staff regarding their child's progress and attend parents' evenings
- Have an entitlement to be fully informed and consulted about the Academy's decisions regarding their child's behaviour

The Academy will:

- Abide by the Home-Academy Agreement
- Ensure that parents are regularly consulted, with the Parent Governor as the principal means for feedback to the Governing Body on parents' views
- Ensure that staff liaise regularly with parents to help them
- Support their child's learning

### **4. Communications**

Parents are kept informed of all Academy activities, events and expectations in the following ways:

- Regular letters providing information about key Academy issues and activities
- Newsletters
- Termly monitoring reports on students' progress
- News bulletins on the website
- Opportunities for on-going dialogue with pastoral staff via telephone and/or email
- Student planners
- Annual parents' evenings
- Sims Learning Gateway

a) Specific meetings with parents are also arranged for the following:

- SEN reviews
- Pastoral Support Programmes
- Education Welfare Advisory Service (EWAS) for punctuality and attendance

b) If there is a concern of any kind about a student, parents will be contacted either by telephone, letter, or email as parents indicate as preference.

c) If a student is continually causing concern, a parent will be requested to meet the appropriate member of staff at the Academy.

d) All staff will be informed of the correct procedures for contacting parents.

e) Copies of all letters sent home, notes taken from telephone calls made and interviews held and monitoring reports should be placed on the students' confidential file.

## **5. Concerns and Complaints**

If parents have a concern, they should:

- Raise the concern verbally with the member of staff or, if more appropriate, their Line Manager as soon as possible. The Academy Organisational Chart is included in the appendix of this document. Alternatively, please phone reception who will advise the appropriate member of staff to contact depending upon the concern.
- Allow the Academy sufficient time to investigate and respond

When does the concern become a complaint?

- When there is serious concern that cannot be resolved in an informal way
- When a concern is strong enough to require the use of formal procedure

If a concern becomes a complaint, then at this stage it becomes formal (See Appendix 1).

Complaints in the following areas have separate procedures:

- Admission to the Academy
- Exclusion of students from the Academy
- Statutory assessment of Special Educational Needs
- Complaints about the curriculum, including religious education and collective worship  
(Please see Appendix 1)

Please see separate relevant policies for the above.

## **6. General principles**

- The Complaints Procedure works sequentially
- Give and expect both courtesy and consideration
- The views of everyone concerned should be both heard and valued
- Remember that students, parents, staff and governors all have rights
- Confidentiality should be respected
- Effective communication is the key to solving disputes and disagreements
- The needs and interests of individual students need to be considered alongside those of the whole Academy community
- Academy staff will keep to the timescales outline

### **Principles**

It is intended that all complaints are resolved as quickly and amicably as possible. It is usually the case that the relevant Line Manager can effectively achieve this informally between those directly concerned. Formal complaints will therefore not be considered until all informal stages have been completed. The stages in the procedure set out below are sequential, and must be followed in order. When a complaint is lodged which attempts to miss out one or more stage, the complainant will be referred to the relevant stage of the procedure. Full confidential written records will be kept at all stages of the complaints procedure.

### **Stage 1 – Informal stage**

The complaint should be put in writing to the relevant member of staff who will investigate the issues raised and respond to the complainant. This may include the complainant being invited into the Academy to discuss the issues, or telephone conversations. An acknowledgement should be made, usually within 24 hours. A written response will be made by the relevant member of staff clearly stating their findings. This should be done as quickly as possible, and be completed in not more than five working days wherever possible. A further communication may be necessary as a follow-up.

In the event of the complainant being dissatisfied with the outcome, the matter should be referred in writing by the complainant to the Line Manager of the member of staff in the first instance. This should be done as soon as possible, but no more than ten working days from the date of the letter sent by the member of staff. The Line Manager will review the current position and make further enquiries as appropriate. This could include a further interview with the complainant. A written response will be made by the Line Manager clearly stating the findings. This should be done as quickly as possible, and be completed in not more than five working days.

### **Stage 2 – Formal complaint**

If the complainant wishes to take the matter further, he/she should write formally to the relevant Leadership Team Line Manager for the relevant Faculty or House in question, setting out exactly what the complaint is and why there is dissatisfaction with the outcome from Stage 1 of the procedure. This should be done as soon as possible, but not later than ten working days from the date of the letter from the member of staff in question wherever possible. The Leadership Team Line Manager will review the matter and arrange to meet the complainant to discuss the matter and try to resolve the outstanding issues. They will send a formal letter to the complainant stating the outcome. They will include in that letter the name and contact point of the Principal to whom the matter should be referred if still unresolved.

### **Stage 3 – Formal complaint to the Principal**

If the complainant wishes to take the matter further, he/she should write formally to the Principal, setting out the complaint and the reasons why the actions taken at Stages 1 and 2 are regarded as unsatisfactory. The Principal will then consider this. The Principal, at his/her discretion, may invite the complainant to discuss the complaint directly with him/her. A letter will be sent to the complainant after the meeting, stating the outcome and reporting any action taken.

### **Stage 4 – Formal complaint to the Chair of Governors**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she can write to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will convene a special Panel to consider the complaint within 15 days of receipt of the complaint. The Panel will consist of 3 members, one of whom must be independent of the management and running of the Academy. The complainant will be invited to meet the Panel in person to put forward their case. Once the Panel has concluded their review, a letter must be sent to the complainant stating the outcome within 5 days. Copies should be sent to all relevant parties involved in the complaint as relevant.

The Panel may also invite members of the Academy staff to attend the meeting to provide background/further information, including details of actions taken/resolutions offered under the earlier stages of the procedure.

### **Definitions**

Please note that for the purposes of this policy, ‘working days’ are those days when the Academy is open for students.

### **Appendices**

1. **Academies, SEN Admissions and Appeals: A guide for parents**
2. **Procedure for Dealing with Parental Complaints Flowchart**
3. **Open Academy Organisational / Line Management Chart**

**ACADEMIES, SEN ADMISSIONS AND APPEALS: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS**

**Introduction**

This guide is to help parents who have a child with a statement of Special Educational Needs, who express a preference for a place at an Academy, and who may wish to appeal against a decision by the Local Education Authority (LA) not to name the Academy in that child's statement.

**What are Academies?**

Academies are publicly funded independent schools. They cater for secondary aged pupils of all abilities and are local schools for local children. Academies are different from LEA schools as their money comes from central government and most belong to a Multi-Academy Trust.

**Academies and Special Educational Needs**

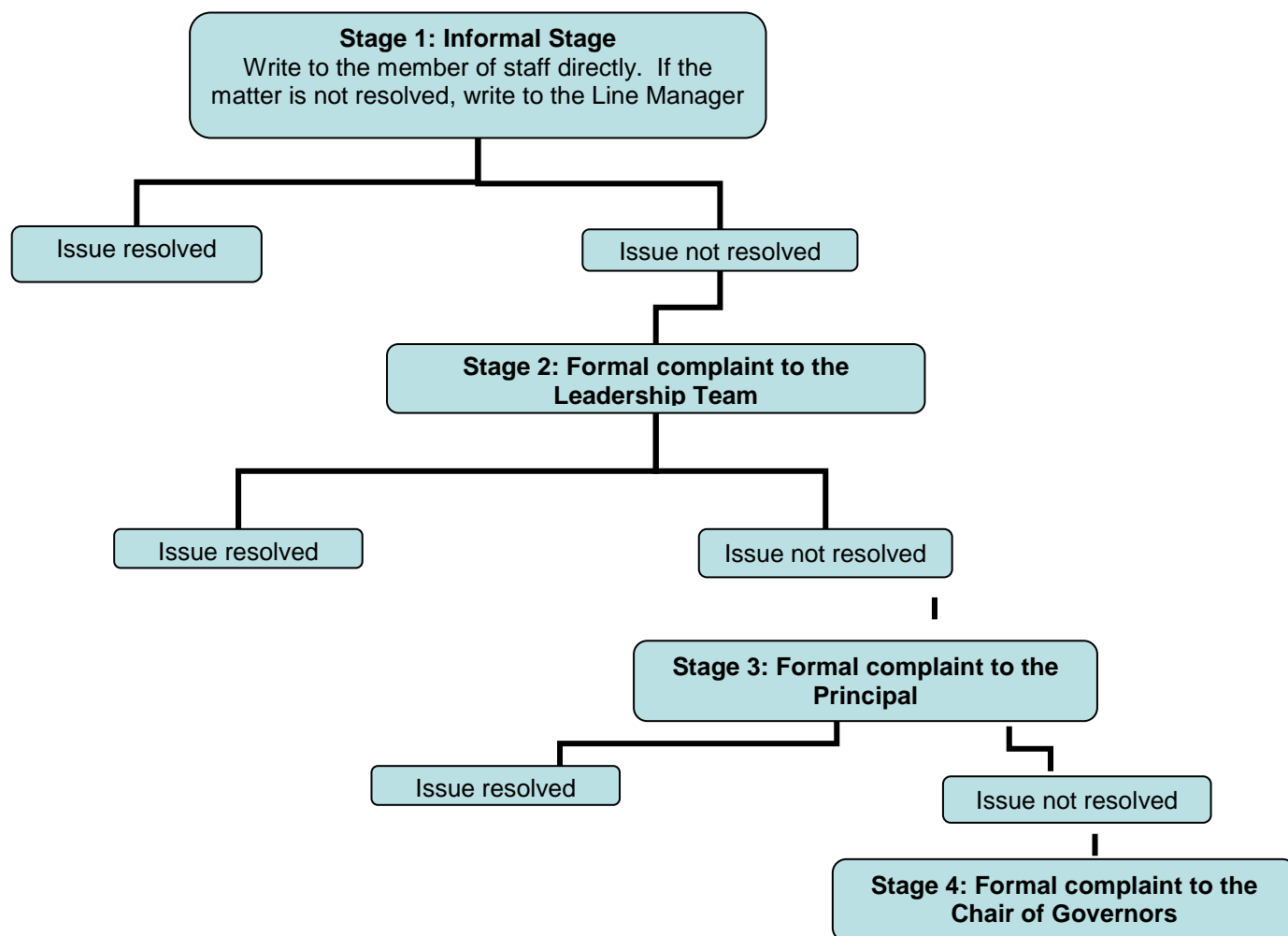
If you have a child with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), you may express a preference for your child to attend a particular school. This includes academies. The LEA may 'name' an Academy in Part IV of that statement. Before naming an Academy in the statement, the LEA must consult the Academy first. The final decision about admitting a child is taken by the LEA after it has reached an agreement with the Academy. Academies are inclusive schools and they admit pupils with Special Educational Needs on an equal basis with others. However, the Academy and the LEA may share the view either that your child's needs cannot best be met at the Academy or that by offering your child a place at the Academy it would be impossible to meet your child's needs alongside those of the other children being educated there. If this is the case, the LEA will then propose an alternative school for your child. However, the LEA must also let you know of your right of appeal against the decision not to name the Academy in your child's statement of Special Educational Needs. You may appeal to HM Courts and Tribunals Service against the decision of the LEA.

For more information about appealing against an SEN decision, see the justice.gov.uk website.

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/send>

## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH PARENTAL COMPLAINTS

### Appendix 2





### Appendix 3

<u>Open Academy Organisational Structure / Line Management</u>							
Role	Business Manager	Principal	Assistant Principal	Vice Principal	Assistant Principal	Assistant Principal	Assistant Principal
Senior Leadership Team member	Jackie Appleby	Jon Ford	Phil Wilkinson	Kevin Ward	Liz Clayton	Pauline Sturgeon	Kate Wenlock
Leadership Focus /Role purpose	Financial management	Organisation and Strategy	Pastoral	Curriculum	Teaching Learning Assessment	Quality Assurance and standards	Achievement & Intervention
Line Management	Associate Staff	SLT	Pastoral/Inclusion	Head of Applied Faculty	Head of Science Faculty	Head of Academic Faculty /Exams	Head of English & Maths / Data Manager
Responsible for	Associate Staff	Vice Principal	Inclusion Co-ordinators	ICT	Science	Geography	English
	Site Team	Assistant Principals	Pastoral Leaders	PE		History	Film
	Cleaners		Inclusion Secretary	Technology		Religious Studies	Media
				Business		Music	Maths
				Alternative Curriculum		Modern Foreign Languages	Data Manager
				Childcare		Art	Librarian
				Drama		PSHEE	
				SENDCO		Photography	
				Teaching Assistants		Director of Sixth Form	