



COMPLAINTS POLICY

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or the young people are concerns rather than complaints. St. Aldhelm's Academy is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish to follow the academy's formal complaints procedure.

The prime aim of the Academy's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the academy.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the DCSF Guidance (School Complaints procedure – 2003) and alongside our family Partnership Agreement.

The St. Aldhelm's Academy policy has 4 main stages:

In summary:

- Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with a staff member.
- Stage 2 – Formal complaint is heard by an appropriate member of staff.
- Stage 3 – Complaint is heard by the Principal.
- Stage 4 – Complaint is heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the academy at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve a concern. The academy requests that parents make their first contact with the Student Support Team, the teacher or the mentor. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which you will receive an informal but informed response in a couple of days. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result, please write or contact the academy within 10 academy working days and state what you would like the academy to do. The academy will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by an appropriate member of staff.

Formal complaints must be put in writing and addressed to the Learning Zone Director, House Manager or Student Support Manager and copied to the Principal. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The academy will acknowledge receipt of the complaint. In many cases this response will also report on the action the academy has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further.

This meeting will normally take place within 10 academy working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as swiftly as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result please contact the academy within 10 academy working days of receiving the response. You will need to tell the academy why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the academy to do.

Stage 3 – Complaint heard by Principal

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the Principal will arrange for a further investigation. Following the investigation, the Principal or the member of SLT designated by the Principal will normally give a written response within 10 academy working days. If you are dissatisfied with the result at Stage 3 you will need to let the academy know within 10 academy working days of receiving the response.

Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body’s Complaints Appeal Panel.

If the matter has still not been resolved, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a complaints panel. The hearing will normally take place within 10 academy working days of the receipt of the letter.

The aim of the panel is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the Academy and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within 3 academy working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

Please note – In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Principal, the Principal and the Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

The Governor’s Appeal Panel is the last academy based stage of the complaints process.