



Orchard Partnership Academies Complaints Policy



Reviewed: Autumn 2022

Mr Alex Davies

Orchard Partnership Academies

Complaints Policy

Introduction

We believe that our academies provide good education for all our children, and that the Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher.

All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

Aims and Objectives

Our academies aim to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide an opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

The Complaints Process

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our academies, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. A mutually convenient time can be arranged very quickly. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Head of School. **The Head of School considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly, within 5 school days. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.**

Should a parent have a complaint about the Head of School, he/she should first escalate this to the Executive Headteacher. If your complaints are still unresolved you should make an informal approach to the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors, who is obliged to investigate it. The Governor in question will do all he/she can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, he/she can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

When a complaint has not been resolved through the normal channels, i.e. teacher, Head of School, Executive Headteacher, then the complaint may be made formal.

Formal Complaint to school – there are four levels through which complaints may pass if unresolved.

Level 1

1. Written letter from Complainant to the school
2. Head of School investigates
3. Head of School replies either by letter or at an arranged meeting
This stage to take no more than 10 school days
4. If Complainant satisfied – No further action
5. If Complainant not satisfied – Complaint moves onto **Level 2**

Level 2

1. Written letter from Complainant to the school
2. Executive Headteacher investigates
3. Executive Headteacher either by letter or at an arranged meeting
This stage to take no more than 10 school days
4. If Complainant satisfied – No further action
5. If Complainant not satisfied – Complaint moves onto **Level 3**

Level 3

1. Complaint made in writing to Chair or Vice-Chair of Governors by Complainant
2. Chair or Vice-Chair investigates the complaint and informs the Complainant
This stage to take no more than 10 school days
3. If Complainant satisfied – No further action
4. If Complainant not satisfied – Complaint moves to **Level 4**

Level 4

1. Matter referred to School Governor's Complaints Committee (First Committee)
2. The Chair or Vice-Chair who has a meeting with the Complainant will not be involved at the Complaint Committee Stage
3. A Formal Complaints Hearing will be arranged.
4. Full notes of this meeting will be made
5. The Governors will make a decision, which will be communicated to the Complainant in a Decision Letter
6. The Decision Letter will give the Governor's decision and the reasons behind that decision
This stage to take no more than 15 school days
7. If Complainant satisfied - No further action

If the complainant believes the school 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 4.

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

Monitoring and Review

The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled correctly.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.