

Concerns and Complaints about Academies

Guidance notes for Parents

If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the academy. Be assured that no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the academy will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

What to do first

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher (primary), form tutor or head of year (secondary).

Any member of staff at the academy can help you and direct you to the most appropriate person to deal with your complaint. If you have a complaint which you feel should be looked at by the Principal/Headteacher in the first instance you can contact him/her straightaway if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. You may need an appointment to do this, and can make one by ringing, calling or emailing the academy. You can take a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to do so.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the academy to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the academy to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If you are dissatisfied with the teacher's response (or with the Principal/Headteacher's initial reaction if he/she has already been involved) you can make a complaint to the Principal/Headteacher. This should be made in writing.

If your complaint is about an action of the Principal/Headteacher personally, then you should refer your complaint to the Local Governing Committee. You can contact them through the Clerk to the Local Governing Committee.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the Hope Learning Trust Complaints Procedures as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the academy.

The Principal/Headteacher will ask to meet you for a discussion of the problem. Again you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Principal/Headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may

interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

Most problems can be resolved by the end of this stage.

If your complaint has not been resolved

If you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the chair of the Local Governing Committee to ask for referral of your complaint to the Local Governing Committee. It will then be heard by a group of governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting which the Principal/Headteacher will also attend. The Hope Learning Trust Complaints Procedure statement explains how these meetings operate.

Further action

Complaints about academy problems are almost always settled within academies but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Secretary of State for Education Again there is more information on this in the Hope Learning Trust Complaints Procedure.