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University Academy Keighley

Complaints Policy and Procedure

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy and procedure is for the benefit of all Parents/Carers at the Academy and members of the local community, and will be relied upon in respect of **complaints**, with the exception of:
- (a) **child protection allegations** where a separate policy and procedure applies;
 - (b) **exclusions** where a separate policy and procedure applies; and
 - (c) **appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications** where a separate appeals procedure applies.
- 1.2 The Academy expects that most concerns can be resolved informally and will use their best endeavours to resolve any complaints on that basis.

2.0 Stage One – Informal Resolution

- 2.1 Most concerns can be dealt with informally.

Our underlying principle is that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

- (i) If parents/carers have a complaint they should normally contact the member of staff concerned; this may be the class teacher, form tutor, team leader or administrative staff.
- (ii) Parents/carers may also choose to speak to a Head of Community, Head of School or an Assistant Principal.
- (iii) Complaints made directly to the Vice Principal or the Academy Principal will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff, the class teacher or form tutor, unless the Vice Principal or the Academy Principal deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- (iv) If the complaint relates to the Principal, the parent is advised to contact the Chair of Governors.
- (v) Complaints made informally to governors will be referred to the Principal or to the Chair of Governors where appropriate.
- (vi) Where no satisfactory solution has been found the parents will be advised of how they can make a formal complaint.

3.0 Stage Two - Formal Complaint to the Principal

- 3.1 The Principal will acknowledge the complaint in writing within **three (3) working days** of receiving the written complaint. The acknowledgement will give a brief explanation of the Academy's complaints procedure and a target day for providing a response to the complaint. This should then normally be within **ten (10) working days**: if this proves impossible, a letter is sent explaining the reason for the delay and giving a revised target date. Where a complaint is received during Academy holidays, the Principal or designate will endeavour to respond to this after the commencement of the new term (usually within **ten (10) working days**).
- 3.2 The Principal will delegate responsibility for undertaking investigation of the complaint to a Middle Leader, Assistant Principal or Vice Principal unless he/she deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- 3.3 The Principal or designate will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- 3.4 The Principal or designate may meet or speak with those concerned to discuss the matter within **ten (10) working days**. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- 3.5 The Principal, or designates, will keep a written record of all meetings, telephone conversations and other documents held in relation to the complaint.
- 3.6 Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made. Parents/carers will be informed of this decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision. Where appropriate, this includes what action the Academy will take to resolve the complaint.
- 3.7 If the Principal has been very closely involved at stage 1, the Chair of Governors should consider carrying out the stage 2 procedures.
- 3.8 If the complaint is against the Principal, this should be made to the Chair of Governors.

4.0 Stage Three – Formal Complaint to Chair of Governors

- 4.1 Upon receipt of a written request by the complainant for the complaint to proceed to stage 3, the procedures outlined below will be followed.
- 4.2 The Clerk to the Governing Body should write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request. The acknowledgement should inform the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by the Chair of Governors, usually within **twenty (20) working** days of receiving the complaint. The letter should also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be received in time for the documents to be received and considered by the Chair.
- 4.3 The Chair will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and (a) reach a decision on the complaint and (b) decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and (c) where appropriate, suggest recommended changes to the Academy's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.
- 4.4 A written statement outlining the decision of the Chair will be sent to the complainant and Principal, usually within **fifteen (15) working days** from the date the complaint is heard.
- 4.5 Every complaint will be taken seriously but anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with through this policy.

5.0 Complaints about the Principal

- 5.1 A parent has no right of appeal against a decision made by the Principal just because it is not to their satisfaction, but they can complain to the Academy Trust who will appoint a governor to investigate that the complaint has been dealt with, and that procedures have been followed within the policies it prescribes.

The complaint should be made in writing and should be addressed to the **Clerk to the Governing Body** at the Academy's address.

6.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 6.1 The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two (2) years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.
- 6.2 Correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential. The Academy will, however, present to the full Governing Body the number of complaints received each academic year and publish these and provide access, on request, to inspectors under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 and to the Secretary of State.

7.0 Approval by the Governing Body and Review Date

7.1 This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the Governing Body at a formally convened meeting

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governing Body)

Date: 15th July 2014

Review date: 14th July 2016

Academy Complaints Flowchart

Summary of Dealing with Complaints

APPENDIX 1 - Academy Complaints Flowchart



