

Inspire Partnership Academy Trust

Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Inspire Partnership Academy Trust (the 'Trust') and our schools aim to meet our statutory obligations when responding to complaints from third parties. This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to the Trust about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.
- 1.2. An effective complaints procedure can defuse problems and provide schools with helpful information. Complaints treated as constructive suggestions can be used to improve standards and may prevent cause for further complaint.
- 1.3. Parents and schools share the same goal: supporting children's education. Because the best way to resolve concerns is through clear, constructive, and respectful communication, to support parents, we recommend that they review the independent, step-by-step guidance on how to raise issues provided by [Parentkind at www.parentkind.org](http://www.parentkind.org).
- 1.4. When responding to complaints, we aim to:
 - Ensure staff are sufficiently trained and supported to take all complaints seriously.
 - Be impartial and non-adversarial.
 - Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel (including a member independent from the running of the school), where necessary.
 - Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response.
 - Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality.
 - Treat complainants with respect.
 - Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process.
 - Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes.

We aim to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The school will give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available both on the Trust and our school websites. A paper copy is also available from any of our school offices.

2. **Legislation and Guidance**

This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which states that we must have and make available a written procedure to deal with complaints from parents of pupils at the school.

It is also based on guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on creating a complaints procedure that complies with the above regulations, and refers to good practice guidance on setting up complaints procedures from the Department for Education (DfE).

3. **Definitions and Scope**

- 3.1. **A concern:** is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”. We will seek to resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible.
- 3.2. **A complaint:** is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”.
- 3.3. Our intention is to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. However, there may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.
- 3.4. For helpful, independent guidance to parents on whether your issue is best raised as feedback, a concern, or a formal complaint, please refer to the **‘What kind of issue is it?’ section of the [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#)**.

4. **Anonymous Complaints**

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headteacher or Chair of the Local Community Council (LCC), if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

5. **Complaint Handling Arrangements**

- 5.1. A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. Often issues can be best resolved by the person closest to your child, usually their teacher before escalating it to a senior leader or the headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.
- 5.2. By taking part in the complaints procedure, everyone involved automatically agrees to keep all information confidential and not share it with any other person (including on social media). This confidential information includes personal details about the people making or responding to the complaint, what the complaint is about, the timeline of the investigation, and the final result.
- 5.3. Information will only be shared by the school with those who need to know it to help handle the complaint, such as staff or volunteers involved in the process. We may also share information if required by law, other professionals or requested by a court or regulatory body.
- 5.4. At each stage in the procedure, the school wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:
 - an explanation
 - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
 - an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
 - an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
 - an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
 - an apology.

- 5.5. While the school is committed to handling all complaints fairly, proportionately, and in accordance with this policy, certain factors may affect the way a complaint is managed. The school recognises that some complaints may include detailed references to legislation, policy, or guidance, including content generated using artificial intelligence (AI) tools. All complaints will be considered in accordance with this policy (or other school policies, such as staff disciplinary procedures); however, the school is not required to provide a legal interpretation or detailed response to every statutory reference included in a submission. Responses will focus on the substantive matters raised and their relevance to the school, its pupils, and staff.
- 5.6. If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.
- 5.7. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.
- 5.8. If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, the complainant will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority safeguarding teams or tribunals/courts, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.
- 5.9. This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:
- Admissions
 - Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
 - Safeguarding matters (Child Protection)
 - Exclusion
 - Whistle-blowing
 - Staff grievances
 - Staff discipline
 - Withdrawal from the curriculum (religious education)

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaints.

- 5.10. Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) about the school's support are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the school's Special Education Needs Co-ordinator; they will then be referred to this Complaints Policy. Our SEN policy includes information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.
- 5.11. Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities must be directed to the provider concerned.

6. **Principles for Investigation**

- 6.1. When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:
- What has happened.
 - Who was involved.
 - What the complainant feels would put things right.

We also intend to address complaints as quickly as possible. To achieve this, realistic and reasonable time limits will be set for each action within each stage. Where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set, and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation for the delay.

- 6.2. It is in everyone's interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest stage. The school expects that complaints will be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and no later than three months afterwards. We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in an effective and fair manner for all involved.

6.3. **Audio or Video Recording**

We will not accept as evidence any recordings that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded. We will not normally permit electronic

recordings of meetings unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it as a reasonable adjustment, and prior consent has been given by all parties.

6.4. **Interviewing Witnesses (Children)**

When interviewing pupils to gather information regarding a complaint, the interview will be conducted in the presence of another member of staff or, in the case of serious complaints (as determined by the school), in the presence of their parents.

7. **Complaints about our Fulfilment of Early Years Requirements**

We will investigate all written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

8. **Stages of Complaints (not complaints against the headteacher, LCC member or trustee)**

The Trust has a three-stage complaints procedure and it is expected that the options for resolution at each stage will be properly explored before escalating to the next stage. Further guidance can be found at Appendix A.

8.1. **Stage 1: informal**

- We expect all complainants to make reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution before moving to Stage 2 as outlined below. To do so, it is a requirement that a face-to-face meeting is arranged with the relevant school or Trust personnel. We will make every effort to meet with the parent, making reasonable adjustments as appropriate for the face-to-face meeting. The same effort is incumbent on the parent.
- We anticipate that almost all complaints that arise will be resolved at Stage 1.
- It is always helpful if the complainant fully outlines the nature of the concern and identifies the outcome they seek. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged

within 2 working days. Once this is received, the complainant will be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with that concern. The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure that you are clear on what action (if any) has been agreed. This may be followed up in writing afterwards.

- We will respect the opinion of a complainant who indicates that they would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff. In this case, the Headteacher will refer the complainant to another designated member of staff. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved in the circumstances leading to the complaint feels too compromised to deal with a complaint, the Headteacher may consider referring the complainant to another member of staff. The member of staff may be more senior, but this is not essential. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.
- Given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion, there is no suggested timescales for the resolution at this stage. We would however expect most issues to be investigated and resolved within 10 days.
- Staff members should ensure all complaints are recorded on the school's central complaints log.
- The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff or the headteacher as appropriate, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. *If you are unsure who the most appropriate person is, please read 'Steps 1 and 2: Who in the school do I go to?' in the [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#), which provides helpful examples of when to speak to a teacher versus a senior leader. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school office.*
- The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and a member of staff. This will normally be the class teacher but can be the phase leader, deputy head or headteacher depending on the circumstances. The outcome and agreed actions from this meeting may be confirmed in writing.

- If the complainant believes the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved informally, the complainant will be informed and provided with guidance on how they may escalate the matter to a Stage 2 formal complaint by referring them to the Complaint Policy.

8.2. **Stage 2: Formal**

- If the matter cannot be resolved through informal action the complainant should inform the school in writing by email submission to the Clerk to the LCC, complaints@inspirepartnership.co.uk. Receipt of the email submission will be acknowledged within 2 working days.
- Formal complaints will be reported to the chair of the LCC immediately and reported termly to all LCC members, once concluded. The chair will be kept informed about progress and outcomes.
- Using the form found at Appendix C, It is very important that the Complainant include a clear statement of the actions they would like us to take to resolve the complaint. We strongly encourage you to use the Complaint Form provided at Annex C of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you. In all cases your written complaint must include:
 - a) the nature of the complaint;
 - b) details of how the matter has been dealt with so far and what remains unresolved;
 - c) the names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of all relevant documents; and
 - d) a clear statement of the outcome you would like to see to resolve your complaint

- For independent tips for parents on how to effectively document these points—such as focusing on facts, staying objective, and suggesting a clear outcome—please see **‘Step 3: How do I raise my complaint?’** in the [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#).
- The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will arrange a meeting with the complainant within 5 working days of the complaint being acknowledged to clarify concerns and seek a resolution.
- The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance. The headteacher (or investigator) may also be accompanied and will inform the complainant of the identity of their companion in advance. Meeting notes will be taken.
- In certain circumstances, we may be required to consider the appropriateness of the companion the complainant requests to accompany them to the meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, we will notify the complainant as soon as we are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment. It is also the Trust’s right to consider the appropriateness of the companion.
- The headteacher (or other person appointed by the headteacher for this purpose) will conduct their own investigation. Those undertaking investigations will seek evidence from relevant documentation and witnesses. Witness evidence will be in the form of written statements or an interview. If a child at the centre of the complaint needs to be interviewed then this will normally be in the presence of a parent/carer or appropriate member of staff.
- The written conclusion of this investigation, setting out the outcome and follow-up actions, will be sent to the complainant within 20 working days of receipt of the Stage 2 complaint. The headteacher should update the complainant if the investigation encounters any delays. It may be appropriate for the headteacher to offer to meet with the complainant to discuss the outcome in person.

- If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, they will be required to confirm this in writing.
- However, If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 and wishes to proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure, they must inform the chair of the LCC in writing within five working days of receipt of the written investigation outcome by emailing complaints@inspirepartnership.co.uk.
- If appropriate, the involvement of the Trust leadership team may take place at Stage 2. They may wish to have a meeting with the complainant prior to or following this formal investigation to discuss a resolution.

8.3. **Stage 3: Complaints Appeal Panel**

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint at the second, formal complaint stage, they should escalate the complaint to the Complaints Appeal Panel (CAP). This must be done within 5 working days from the conclusion of the Stage 2 investigation and receipt of the written outcome by emailing the Clerk to the LCC at complaints@inspirepartnership.co.uk. No new complaints may be added at this stage – they must be dealt with from Stage 1. Only matters outlined in the previous complaint will be considered.
- The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within five school days.
- The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within twenty school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.
- The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish. We will consider the appropriateness of companions as generally we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives, but there may be rare occasions when it may be considered appropriate and therefore allowed at the

discretion of the Trust (e.g., if a school employee is called as a witness and they wish to be supported by their union).

- If the complainant rejects the offer of two proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.
- The complainant must have at least 10 days' notice of the date of the review panel; however, the CAP reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the complainant.
- The CAP will be appointed by the LCC and must consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one panel member must be independent from the running of the school (e.g., from the LCC of another school within the Trust). This independent member will not be a member, trustee, or employee of the Trust.
- The Complaints Appeal Panel (CAP) will review the Stage 2 investigation, including any recommendations. Their consideration will take into account the complainant's reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome.
- The panel will be provided with a report outlining the existing record of the complaint's progress.
- The Complaints Review Panel meeting will proceed irrespective of whether or not the complainant attends. If the complainant fails to attend on the day, the Complaints Review Panel will still proceed in their absence and the process will continue to its conclusion.
- At the CAP meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting. Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 2 school days before the date of the meeting.

- Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require this as reasonable adjustments. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending will be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.
- At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence. The panel, the complainant and the school representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and school representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered by the CAP.
- After the hearing, the CAP will consider their decision and inform you and, where relevant, the person complained about their decision in writing within five school days. The letter will set out the decision of the committee together with the reasons underpinning that decision. The committee can (by a majority if necessary):
 - a) dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
 - b) uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
 - c) decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
 - d) where appropriate recommend changes to the school and/or Trust systems and procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

This then concludes the final stage of the Trust Complaints process.

- The Chair of the CAP will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 10 working days of the CAP meeting.

9. **Complaints against the Headteacher, LCC Member or Trustee**

9.1. Complaints made against the headteacher should be directed to the leadership team of the Trust and copied to the chair of the LCC. Any formal investigation at Stage 2 of the

procedure should be carried out by a member of the partnership's leadership team, an LCC member from another of the partnership's schools or an external appointee as necessary.

- 9.2. Where a complaint is against the chair of the LCC or any LCC member, it should be made in writing by emailing complaints@inspirepartnership.co.uk in the first instance. The Trust will appoint a CAP drawn from LCC members from other schools within the Trust to investigate the complaint combining Stages 2 and 3 of this complaints process. The complainant will receive written notification of the CAP decision within 20 days of the complaint being raised with the executive team.
- 9.3. Complaints against a trustee will normally be handled by other members of the Board of Trustees not previously involved in the complaint. The complaint should be addressed to the clerk to the Board of Trustees. A CAP will be drawn from other Trustees or members of the Trust who will combine Stage 2 and 3. The complainant will receive written notification of the CAP decision within 20 days of the complaint being raised with the Board of Trustees.

10. **Referring complaints on completion of the school's procedure**

- 10.1. If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the final Stage 3 of the school's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DfE .
- 10.2. If the school did not deal with the complaint properly, it will be asked to re-investigate the complaint. If the school's complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, we will be asked to correct our procedure accordingly.
- 10.3. **What should I do if I remain dissatisfied at the end of the procedure?**

If a complaint has completed the local procedures and the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied, they have a right to refer their complaint to the Department for Education. They may only be able to help if you are unable to complain, or are not satisfied with how the school handles your complaint, because the school:

- does not have a complaints procedure
- did not provide a copy of its complaints procedure when requested
- does not have a procedure that complies with statutory regulations
- has not followed its published complaints procedure
- has not allowed its complaints procedure to be completed

The DfE cannot change our decision about a complaint. Their role is to make sure the academy handles your complaint properly by following a published process. The DfE will not normally consider complaints received more than 12 months after a decision or the academy's last action.

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

11. **Persistent Complaints**

- 11.1. Where a complainant attempts to re-open the issue with the school after the complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and the school has done everything we reasonably can in response to the complaint, the chair of the LCC (or other appropriate person in the case of a complaint about the chair of the LCC or a Trustee) will inform the complainant that the matter is closed.
- 11.2. If the complainant subsequently contacts the school again about the same issue, the school can choose not to respond. The normal circumstance in which we will not respond is if:
- The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs; and
 - The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and their options (if any); and
 - The complainant is contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time.

- 11.3. However, this list is not intended to be exhaustive. The school will be most likely to choose not to respond if:
- We have reason to believe the individual is contacting the school with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience; and/or
 - The individual's letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive; and/or
 - The individual makes insulting personal comments about, or threats towards, school staff.
- 11.4. We support the independent advice provided by Parentkind that building a crowd, taking issues to social media, or behaving aggressively harms the resolution process. For more information on how schools manage unreasonable behaviour, please review the 'How complaints go wrong' and '**Where parents act unreasonably**' sections of the [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#). Additionally, further information can be found in the Trust's [Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints](#).

12. **Duplicate Complaints**

If we receive identical complaints from a spouse, partner, or family member, these will not be addressed again. The individual making the second complaint will be informed that the complaint has been dealt with. If new details are provided, they will be investigated.

Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing, either by letter or email. The school will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaint are heard, and that the school acts reasonably.

13. **Complaints Campaigns**

Where the Trust becomes the subject of a complaints campaign from complainants who are not part of the Trust or school's community, a standard, single response will be published on the Trust or school's website. If the academy receives a large number of complaints about the same subject from complainants who are connected to the academy, e.g. parents, each complainant will receive an individual response.

14. **Barring From the Premises**

School premises are private property and any individual may be barred from entering the premises. If an individual's behaviour is cause for concern, the headteacher will ask the individual to leave the premises.

The headteacher will notify the parties involved in writing, explaining that their implied licence for access to the premises has been temporarily revoked and why, subject to any representations that the individual may wish to make. The individual involved will be given the opportunity to formally express their views regarding the decision to bar them.

15. **Record Keeping**

Each Trustschool will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls. A log of all complaints will be held. All formal complaints will be reported to the LCC and all complaints raised by external bodies, e.g. the EFSA, will be reported to the Trust Board.

16. **Transferring Data**

When a pupil changes school, the pupil's educational record will be transferred to the new school and no copies will be kept. However, the school will retain complaint records for any current ongoing complaints in line with our Document Retention policy.

Schools should generally only share pupil complaints with a new school if it is necessary for safeguarding, welfare, or educational support, as per data protection laws. While essential information, particularly around child protection, should be transferred to aid transition, general complaints are not automatically shared and usually require consent or a legal obligation.

Key Considerations

- Safeguarding & Welfare: If a complaint relates to safeguarding, child protection, or behavioral issues that could put the pupil or others at risk, schools should share this information to ensure support is in place for the child.

- Data Protection & Lawful Basis: Sharing information must comply with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is recommended to justify sharing sensitive personal information.
- Transfer of Records: General records are transferred via a common transfer file (CTF), but formal complaints are not automatically part of this, unless deemed necessary for the pupil's education.
- Purpose of Sharing: Information is usually shared with the new school to ensure a smooth transition, support the pupil's learning, and for safety reasons.

If a complaint is minor, has been fully resolved, and does not pose a risk or have any ongoing implications for the child's care, it may not be necessary to disclose it. However, if the complaint has a lasting impact on the child's support needs, it should be disclosed.

This material will be treated as confidential and held securely, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or at the Complaints Appeal Panel in Stage 3.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or other body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

To ensure impartiality, the details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with all the LCC members in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

17. **Learning Lessons**

The LCC will review and monitor any underlying issues raised by complaints with the senior leadership team, or others and, where appropriate, determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. Key findings of lessons learnt will be shared with the Trust leadership team to facilitate improvements in all Inspire Partnership Trust schools.

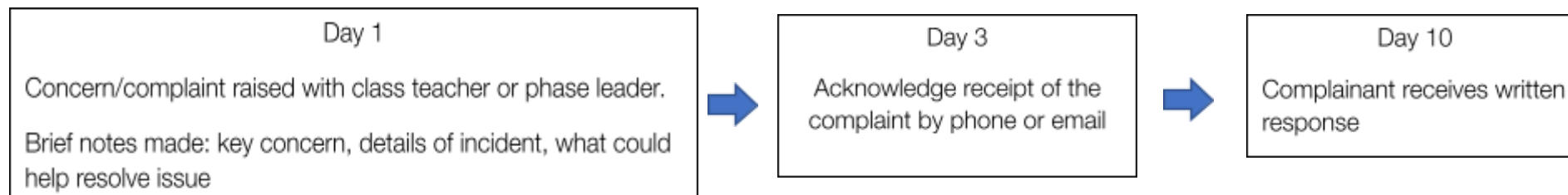
18. **Monitoring arrangements**

Working closely with the Trust senior leadership team, the LCC will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring that complaints are handled properly. The LCC will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in the previous section.

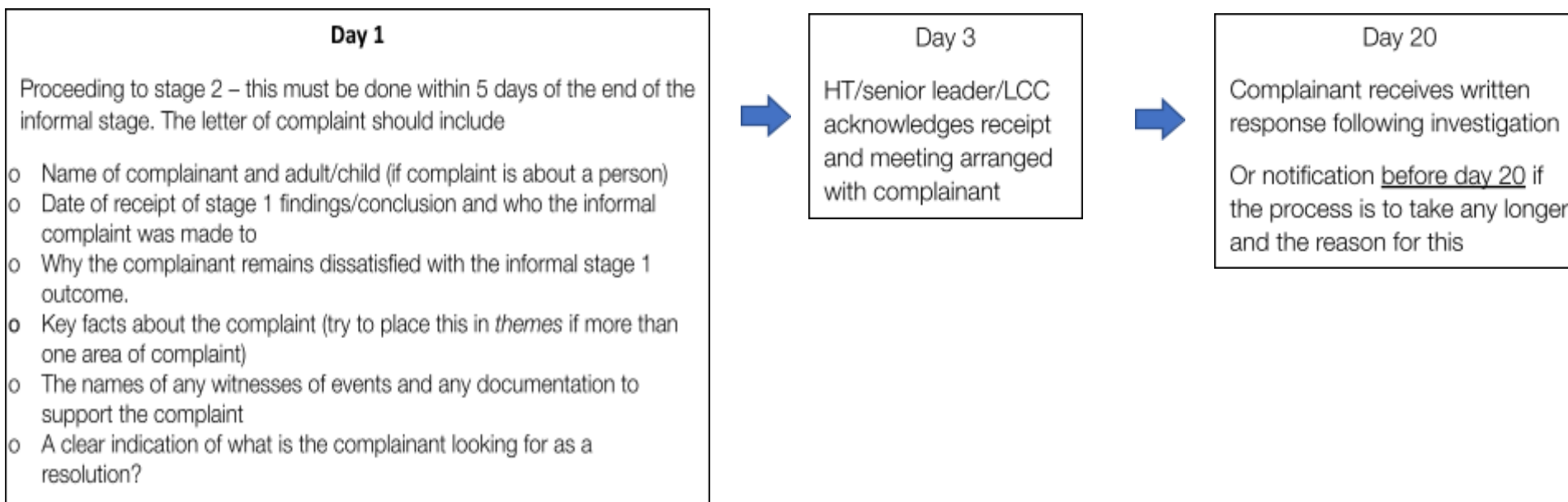
Appendix A - Flow chart for concerns and formal complaints (note days are school working days)

For independent tips on how to effectively document these points—such as focusing on facts, staying objective, and suggesting a clear outcome—please see ‘Step 3: How do I raise my complaint?’ in the [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#)

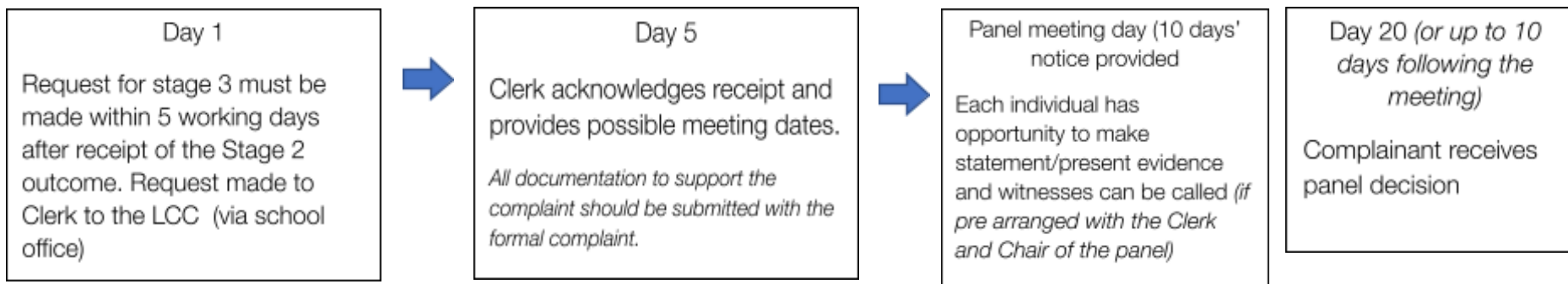
Informal Stage 1



Formal Stage 2 (if complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, a formal complaint is raised)



Formal Stage 3 (if complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal Stage 2 a complaints panel will be formed)



Appendix B

Formal Stage 3

Complaints Appeal Panel - Roles and Responsibilities

1. **The Clerk (Stage 3):**

Responsible for acknowledging the Stage 3 request, providing meeting dates, and distributing all documentation to the panel and parties involved.

2. **The Chair of the Panel (Stage 3)**

Responsible for ensuring the meeting is conducted in a non-adversarial manner, that each party has the opportunity to state their case, and that the panel reaches a clear decision based on the evidence.

3. **Independent Panel Member**

At least one person on the Stage 3 panel must be independent of the running of the school to ensure total impartiality.

Appendix C

Formal Complaints Form (Stage 2)

Please complete and return this form to the Headteacher / Clerk to the LCC (as appropriate), who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Full Name:	
Relationship to Pupil (e.g., Parent, Carer):	
Full Address:	
Contact Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
<p>2. Complaint Summary</p> <p>Please provide a concise summary of your complaint. Include key facts, relevant dates, and the names of any individuals involved.</p> <p><i>If you require more space, please attach additional sheets to this form</i></p>	Details:
<p>3. Action Taken at Stage 1</p> <p>Please provide details of the Stage 1 informal process. * Who did you speak to at Stage 1?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were the findings/outcome of the Stage 1 investigation?• Why are you dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response?	Details:

<p>4. Witnesses and Evidence</p> <p>Please list any witnesses who can support your account and any documentation you are providing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witness Names: • Supporting Documents attached: (e.g., emails, letters, reports) 	
<p>5. Desired Resolution</p> <p>What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage? (e.g., an explanation, an apology, a change in school policy/procedure, or a specific action regarding the pupil)</p>	<p>Details:</p>
<p>6. Signature:</p>	
<p>7. Date:</p>	

Official Use Only

- Date Form Received: _____
- Received By: _____
- Date Acknowledgement Sent: _____
- Complaint Reference Number: _____