



*Creative  
Education  
Trust*

# Complaints Policy

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Head of Governance
<b>Approved by</b>	Trust Board on 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>Last reviewed</b>	July 2024
<b>Next review date</b>	July 2025



## **Policy aims and principles**

At Creative Education Trust, we believe that every child should be provided with the correct tools to have a positive start in life we and are committed to ensuring our schools achieve this on a daily basis.

We understand that we may not always get it right. This policy is aimed at outlining the process should you wish to address any concerns or complaints with us, so that we can work in partnership with you to resolve them at the earliest convenience.

This policy is written with the best intention to resolve any concerns or complaints proactively and collaboratively with the complainant in the best interest of the pupils at the school. It also adheres to the relevant legislation: Education (Independent School Standards (England) Regulations 2014, Schedule 1, Part 7)

## **The difference between a concern and a complaint**

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*. A complaint may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. Our schools take concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If a complainant has difficulty discussing a concern or complaint with a particular member of staff, they may be referred to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern or complaint, it may be referred to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern or complaint objectively and impartially is more important.

## **Scope of policy**

This policy can be used by anybody. This includes parents or carers of students at any academy within the Trust and members of the general public. This policy is available on the Trust and individual school websites and can also be made available upon request.

Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

Where a complainant is not directly associated with a school and/or the complaint is about general CET priorities, processes or policies, the process may not necessarily follow the procedure outlined below.



## Complaints not covered within this policy

Exceptions	Who to contact / Applicable policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Admissions to schools</li> <li>● School reorganisation proposals</li>   <li>● Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs</li> </ul>	<p>For school admissions and school reorganisation proposals, complaints should be raised through the relevant Local Authority Admission appeals process.</p> <p>Complaints about statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs should be raised with the Local Authority.</p> <p>Other complaints relating to the school's SEND provision are within the scope of this policy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under Safeguarding and Child Protection (including Safer Recruitment) policy, available on the school website, and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exclusion of children from school*</li> </ul>	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p>Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the school's behaviour policy can be made through this complaint process.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	<p>The Trust has a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters directly with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff grievances</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the Trust's Grievance Policy.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff conduct</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints about staff conduct can be made via this policy but will be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and/or the Harassment and Bullying Policy, as appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>



Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises/facilities	Providers may have their own complaints policy so complainants should ask the school which process to follow.
Data protection	Different procedures apply to Freedom Of Information and Data Protection (DP) correspondence. You should contact the Data Protection Officer of the Trust at <a href="mailto:DPO@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk">DPO@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk</a> or approach the Information Commissioners Office for further advice.

## Timescales

A complainant must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, **within three months** of the last of these incidents. We will not consider complaints made outside of this time frame unless exceptional circumstances apply.

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Please see the below procedure for timescales at the different stages.

## Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure, the main aim is 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.

## Confidentiality and data use

All complaints will be kept as confidential as possible. Usually, only those involved in investigating and making a decision will be made aware of the full details of the complaint.

The person who is being complained about will also be entitled to know the substance of the complaint against them. The school has discretion to withhold information when there is sufficient reason, such as:

- Where there is a need to protect a source;
- Where there is a legal reason why the information should not be released;
- To meet data protection requirements.



At every stage, records of meetings and investigations will be kept in a complaint log. This is to aid the investigation if it moves through the process.

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

Termly reports outlining the number, themes of complaints, the stage at which each complaint was resolved and any action taken by the school (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld) will be produced for the Academy Council. This report will be compiled by the Governance team.

The relevant Academy Council will use the reports to consider the number and subject of complaints, to identify any trends or areas of concern and make recommendations for action. Reporting will also be shared with the Audit and Risk Committee.

Any complaints made about the Principal/Headteacher, a member of Creative Education Trust's central team, a Trustee or the Chief Executive Officer will also be kept in a complaint log.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

There is no duty for the Trust to pursue anonymous complaints because there is no named complainant to respond to, and on this basis anonymous complaints will not be addressed under the terms of this policy.

In exceptional circumstances, if such complaints allege or imply a serious matter that may be to the detriment of the school or Trust, then it will be at the Trust's discretion to consider whether a fact-finding exercise should take place to determine if the matter requires further investigation.

### **Complaints Campaigns**

Should a large volume of complaints be received, all of which are about the same subject, the school/ Trust may decide, further to an investigation, to send a template response to all complainants or to publish a single response on the school's website. If complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, the normal procedures will apply.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board unless there are any significant in-year changes to legislation or legal advice.



## Complaints Procedure

### Informal Stage- Raising a concern

A concern can be communicated in person, in writing, by email or by telephone. They may also be communicated by a third party acting on behalf of a concerned party, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so. Concerns at a school level, should be raised with either the class teacher or Head of Year in the first instance wherever possible and appropriate. When the concern is received in writing, by email or by telephone, staff should acknowledge the concern within **2 school days** and respond as soon as possible and in all events within **5 school days**.

Concerned parties should not approach individual Academy Council members to report problems. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at a later stage of the procedure.

An informal concern that involves or is about the Principal or Headteacher may be addressed to the Governance team at [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk). The Governance team will acknowledge the concern within **2 school days** and all concerns will be responded to in full within **5 school days**. If this timescale cannot be achieved, the complainant will be advised of this and given an indication as to the likely investigation timescale.

Concerns about Creative Education Trust central team, an Academy Council member, a Trustee, or the Chief Executive Officer should be addressed to the Governance team at [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk). Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable concerned parties to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, print sizes or languages, assisting concerned parties in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied and can articulate what remains unresolved, the matter becomes a formal complaint requiring investigation and will move to Stage 1 of the process.

### Formal Stage One- Investigation by the Principal

Formal complaints must be made via the CET stage 1 complaint form. Please contact the school office for a link to this form or find it at the end of this document (Appendix One). If a complainant is unable to access the internet, or is otherwise unable to complete the form, then they should contact the school office who will make alternative arrangements to receive their complaint. All complaints must be sent to [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk) via email or handed to the school office in a closed envelope clearly marked "FAO: CET Governance team. Formal Complaint"

Upon receipt of the form, the Governance team will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **3 school days**. The Governance team will then ensure the complaint reaches the relevant Principle/Headteacher. The Principal/Headteacher should avoid involving their associated Director at this stage but they can use the Governance team for advice if required.



*Note: The Principal/Headteacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team, but will maintain oversight at all times and be responsible for the final decision.*

During the investigation, the Principal/Headteacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Principal/Headteacher will provide a formal written response within **10 school days** of the date of acknowledgement of the complaint. If the Principal is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint. The response to the complaint must be sent to the Governance team for audit purposes.

If the complaint is about the Principal/Headteacher, Creative Education Trust's central team, an Academy Council member, a Trustee, or its CEO, their relevant line manager will complete all the actions at Stage 1 and all stage 1 formal complaints must be sent to [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk). All timescales are the same. At the conclusion of any investigation, a formal written response will be provided.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 2. This must be done within **10 school days** of receipt of the stage 1 response via the CET stage 2 complaint form, which will be provided in the stage 1 written response and should be sent to The Governance team at [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk).

### **Formal Stage Two- Investigation by member of Academy Council**

Stage 2 involves a review and, if necessary, further investigation by a member of the Academy Council who has not been involved in Stage 1. The Governance team has **5 school days** in which to acknowledge the complaint and **15 school days** in which to respond in writing/by email and resolve the matter formally.

During the investigation, the member of the Academy Council will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

Again, the response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 3, an investigation by a member of CET central team. This must be done within **10 school days** of receipt of the stage 2 response via the CET stage 3 complaint form, which will be provided in



the stage 2 written response. This should be sent to the Governance team at [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk)

If the complaint is about a member of Creative Education Trust's central team, an Academy Council member, a Trustee, or its Chief Executive Officer, this stage will not be completed and the complaint will automatically be escalated to Stage 3.

### **Formal Stage Three- Investigation by a member of CET central team**

Stage 3 involves a review and, if necessary, further investigation by a member of the CET central team who has not been involved in Stage 1 or 2. The Governance team has **5 school days** in which to acknowledge the complaint and **15 school days** in which to respond in writing/by email and resolve the matter formally.

During the investigation, the member of CET central team will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

Again, the response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school will take to resolve the complaint.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to stage 4, a meeting with a panel. This must be done within **10 school days** of receipt of the stage 3 response via the CET stage 4 complaint form, which will be provided in the stage 3 written response. This should be sent to the Governance Team at [complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk](mailto:complaints@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk).

***This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.***

### **Formal Stage Four- Panel Review**

The Governance team will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **5 school days**.

The Governance team will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting and complete Stage 4 within **30 school days** of receipt of the Stage 4 request. If this is not possible, the Governance team will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of proposed dates three times, without good reason, the Governance team 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 Complaints Appeal Panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The panel will usually consist of a member of the Academy Council and an Executive Director of Creative Education Trust, plus an individual who is independent of the management and running of the school. This individual may be an Academy Council member of a different school within Creative Education Trust, provided that they are not also a member of the Board of Trustees or an Executive Director.





In some cases, the Trust may seek to have a panel member that is completely independent of the management and running of the Trust.

Please see below table for panel constitution for complaints about other members of Creative Education Trust

Complaint about	Panel constitution
Creative Education Trust central team	1x Trustee 1x CEO 1x Executive Director
Executive Director	1x Trustee 1x individual independent of the management and running of the Trust 1 x CEO
Academy Council member	3x Individuals that are independent of the management and running of the school
CEO	Chair of Trustees 1x Other Trustee 1x individual independent of the management and running of the Trust
Trustee	3x Members

### Panel Process

The panel will invite parties to a meeting in person. The only exceptions to this are if

- a) the complainant does not want to meet in person, or
- b) the panel determines that there are highly exceptional circumstances in relation to personal conduct that make a remote meeting more appropriate. In making their decision the panel will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

A complainant may bring someone along to the panel to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Neither party should bring legal representatives to the panel meeting.

*Note: Complaints about school or Trust staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any school or Trust staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.*

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least **10 school days** before the meeting, the Governance team will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates as previously agreed by all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the panel at least **5 school days** before the meeting.



Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least **5 school days** before the date of the meeting. The panel will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The panel will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private and may be in a remote/virtual format in circumstances described above. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The panel can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the panel will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the panel will provide the complainant and the school with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing/by email, within **5 school days**.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the Trust or school will take to resolve the complaint.

The panel will ensure that those findings and recommendations are sent by mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, along with what actions have been taken, regardless of the decision.

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

### **Next Steps**

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 DfE after they have completed Stage 4.



The DfE will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made. They will consider whether the Trust has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint and whether they have followed [Part 7 of the Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

The complainant can refer their complaint to the DfE online at [www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe](http://www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe)

In [their guidance](#), the DfE recommends that complainants contact the school to discuss a concern first, as most problems can be resolved this way. Complainants may only complain to the DfE directly where it relates to a child at risk, a child missing school or where the school has failed to follow its complaints procedure.

If a complainant lodges a concern directly with the DfE about a child at risk or missing school, and the DfE confirms with the Trust that the substance of the concern has been addressed to their satisfaction, the Trust reserves the right to consider the matter closed.

### **Serial and Persistent complaints**

Schools should do their best to be helpful to people who contact them with a complaint or concern or a request for information. However, in cases where an academy is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks them to reconsider their position, schools will need to act appropriately.

There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It may be the case that new information has come to light that could not have been considered by the leader who initially investigated the complaint. If so, then the complainant should share the information so that the initial complaint outcome can be reviewed in the light of it. Alternatively, the complainant may value a discussion with the Principal or Head of Governance about the rationale behind the complaint outcome, and/or a potential positive way forward. The letter that communicates the complaint investigation's findings will offer this opportunity. If the complainant simply re-submits a complaint that is about the same issue, and it has already been considered fully at each applicable stage outlined within this policy, then the Principal or Head of Governance should make this clear and advise the complainant about any external complaints route that is available. The Principal or Head of Governance should also seek to identify with the complainant any reasonable actions that can be taken forward to minimise the possibility of additional concerns in the future. Where these are agreed, they should be summarised in writing.

If, further to the above, the complainant contacts the school again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the Principal or Head of Governance will respond briefly to explain this, and that no further action will be taken.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Note:** The DfE does not itself use the term 'vexatious' when dealing with serial or persistent correspondents as it could potentially be inflammatory. However, it is a recognised term. In the context of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, the Upper Tribunal concluded that 'vexatious' could be defined as the '*...manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure.*' An exemption therefore exists in Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, this exemption can only be applied to requests themselves, and not the individuals who submit them.



Under no circumstances should an individual be marked as serial for exercising their democratic right to refer their complaint to their local MP regardless of which stage the complaint has reached.

Complainants should be reassured that submitting complaints about substantially differing events or issues will not mean that they are regarded as a 'serial or persistent complainer' under this policy and that each of the separate issues they raise will be considered.

### **Unreasonable complainants**

CET is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening. Once a complainant's behaviour has become so extreme as to be deemed unreasonable and abusive, they will not necessarily be entitled to all stages of the complaint procedure outlined above.

CET defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to cooperate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the DfE
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.



Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school about the complaint while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Principal/Headteacher will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before deeming the complainant's behaviour to be 'unreasonable.'

If the behaviour continues, the Principal/Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing/by email. This may include barring an individual from the school.

Ultimately, if a complainant persists to the point that the Principal/Headteacher considers it to constitute harassment, legal advice should be sought as to the next steps. In some cases, injunctions and other court orders have been issued to complainants because of their behaviours.

### **The decision to stop responding to a serial complainant.**

The decision to stop responding should never be taken lightly. A school needs to be able to say yes to all of the following:

- The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs;
- No new information about the complaint has been provided that was originally unavailable to the investigating colleague and that prompts a review of the initial findings
- The complainant has been given a clear statement of the school's position and their options (if any); and
- They are contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time.

The case is stronger if the Principal/Headteacher agrees with one or more of these statements:

- There is good reason to believe the individual is contacting them with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience – perhaps the complainant has stated this
- The complainant uses abusive or aggressive language within their oral and/or written communications. Their letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive.
- The complainant insults and/or threatens staff or others.

Leaders should not stop responding just because an individual is difficult to deal with or asks complex questions.

Schools must provide parents with the information they are entitled to under The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

However, where an individual's behaviour is causing a significant level of disruption leaders may implement a tailored communications strategy such as restricting them to a single point



of contact via an email address or by limiting the number of times they make contact: e.g. a fixed number of contacts per term. This will be reviewed after six months.

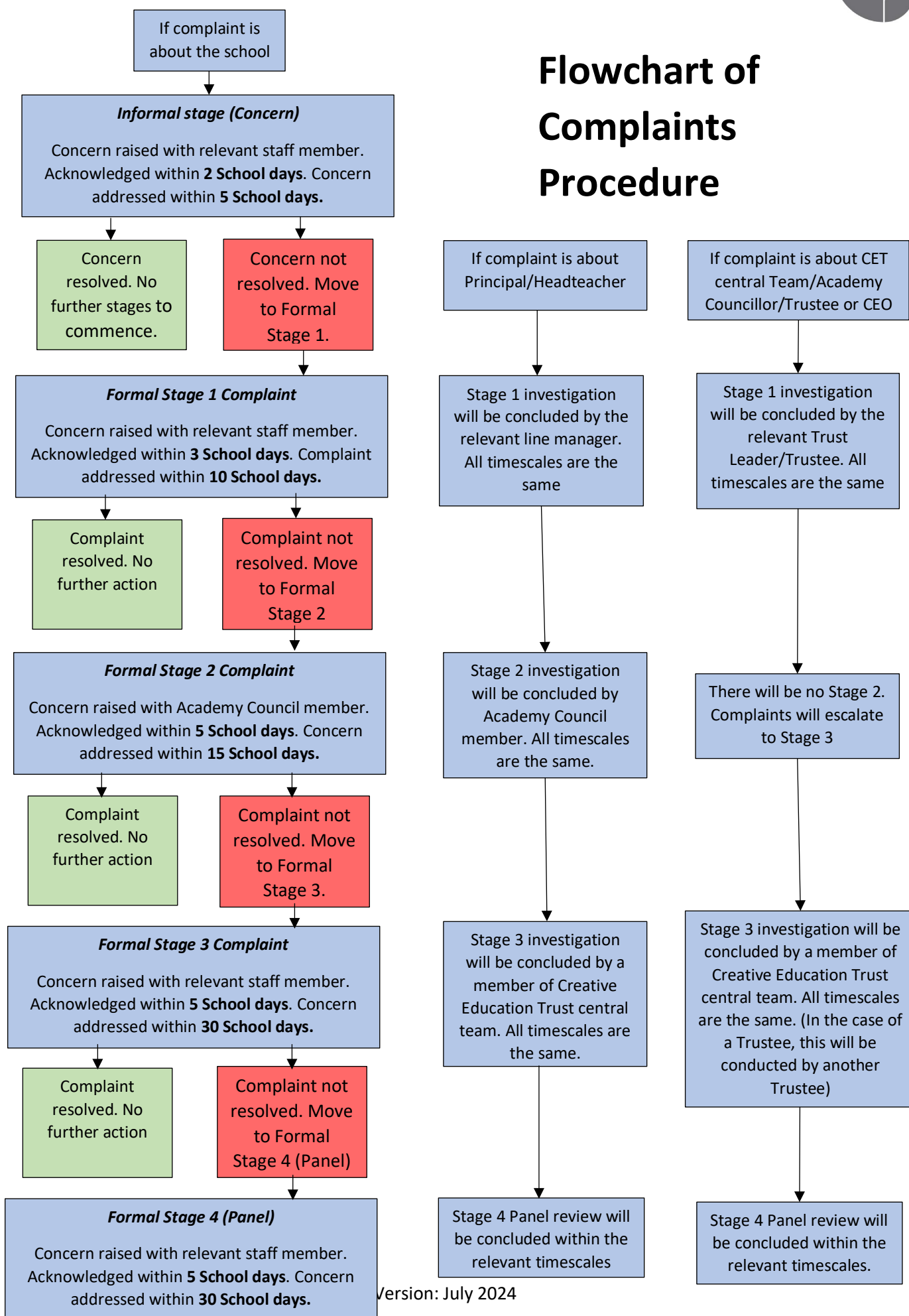
Complainants who may have been restricted in their communications with the school can also be advised to ask a third party to act on their behalf, such as the local [Citizens Advice Bureau](#).

Complainants have a right to have any new complaint heard and failure to respond at all to a complainant could mean that the school is failing to comply with its legal obligations.

Once the Principal or Headteacher has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, they will need to let the complainant know; ideally, through a hard copy letter but an email will suffice.



# Flowchart of Complaints Procedure





## **Appendix One- Stage one Complaint form**

<b>Your details</b>	
Name of School	
Name of Complainant	
Daytime telephone number	
Evening telephone number	
Email address	
<b>Details of your complaint</b>	
<p><i>In setting out your complaint, provide the facts as clearly as you can. In particular give as much detail as you can about:</i></p> <p><i>a) Date(s), time(s), and locations. If you cannot remember the date(s) of the incident complained of, you should say so;</i></p> <p><i>b) The incident itself, or if there was more than one, each of them. If the incident(s) occurred over a period of time, you should say when the period ended or when the latest incident occurred;</i></p> <p><i>c) Details of anyone who witnesses the incident(s);</i></p> <p><i>d) The effect that the incident(s) had on you or whoever was the wronged person</i></p>	
<b>Has this complaint been raised informally as a concern?</b>	
<p><i>If Yes, please give as much detail as possible. If No, then please speak to the relevant member of staff unless concern is about the Principal/Headteacher in which case refer to point in the policy above</i></p>	
<b>What action would resolve this complaint for you?</b>	
<b>Are you attaching any documents? <i>If Yes, please provide details</i></b>	
<b>Complainant signature</b>	
<b>Date form was completed</b>	
<b>For School/ Trust use only</b>	
Date Complaint received	
Date Acknowledgement sent	
Date Complaint was sent to relevant staff member	
On Complaints log?	