



Healing Multi-Academy Trust

Complaints Procedure

Author and Reviewer	Mr P Matthews and Trust HR Lead
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Consultations/Training	LGBs, Teaching & Support Staff Unions

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Healing Multi-Academy Trust (HMAT) has the formal responsibility to respond to complaints from parents. These complaints are of a general nature and each School has a responsibility to publish a procedure that is not curriculum related. The Governors of the School together with the Principal/Headteacher will accept and listen to general complaints openly and expediently with a view to finding solutions. The School accepts that it will act in a manner that is customer focussed and seek amicable settlements to help to enhance relationships with parents.

Electronic Recording of Meetings

Recording of meetings with electronic devices, eg mobile phones, recorders, video cameras, tape recorders or voice recording devices **is not permitted**. Minutes of meetings will be distributed to attendees and agreed in draft that the minutes are a reasonable account of what was discussed in the meeting.

The Procedure

Stage 1

The complaint must be sent to the School in writing by the complainant, it will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days.

Complainants must speak with the Principal/Headteacher to try to resolve the matter, this may be by talking through the complaint on the telephone or alternatively at a meeting in the School. Every effort will be made during this process to resolve the matters that are causing concern.

This part of the process may be delegated to a Vice Principal/Deputy Headteacher where the Principal/Headteacher feels that progress can be made and there are no conflicts of interest between parties. It will be pertinent where the complaint is against the Principal/Headteacher to use a Vice Principal/Deputy Headteacher to lead the investigations. The Principal/Headteacher or Vice Principal/Deputy Headteachers may use external professionals to assist with investigations.

Should this part of the procedure resolve the complaint then the procedure will be stopped and no further action will be taken to progress the complaint to the next stage.

Stage 2

Should stage one of the procedure fail to resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction then the formal written complaint will again be acknowledged to inform them that stage two will be invoked to try to find a solution to the complaint.

A copy of the complaint will be sent to the Chair of Governors and he/she will try to resolve the matter with the complainant. This will give a further opportunity for the complaint to be resolved without the need to progress the matter to a formal Complaints Committee; that is not to say the Chair of Governors has no authority to take decisions that will uphold or rescind earlier decisions. The Chair of Governors may use external professionals to assist with resolving cases, where he/she thinks it necessary.

The Chair of Governors will attempt to resolve the matter by talking to the complainant on the telephone or will arrange to meet with the complainant to discuss ways to resolve the complaint. The Chair of Governors will interview or take statements from internal parties to the complaint.

The Chair of Governors will take whatever decisions he/she makes judgement upon and formally write to the complainant giving the decision. Where it becomes necessary to use other espoused procedures the Chair of Governors will take advice and the School will follow the appropriate policy.

If the complainant is still unhappy with the outcomes of this part of the procedure then the Governors will investigate the complaint at stage three and the Chair of Governors will convene a formal Complaints Committee to hear the complaint.

Stage 3

The complaint will be taken to the Governors' Complaints Committee when the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 and wishes to take the matter to the next stage.

When the complainant wishes to take the matter to the Governors' Complaints Committee a formal request should be made to the Chair of Governors in writing. The Chair will convene a meeting of the committee within 15 school days of receiving the letter.

The Governors' Complaints Committee will contain 3 or 5 members. It will not contain members of the Governing Body who have had prior involvement in the case and will contain at least one member who is independent of the management and running of the school.

The Complaints Committee will convene to hear the complaint from the complainant. The complainant will be given time to present their case to the hearing. The Principal/Headteacher will then present the School's case to the hearing.

When all presentations have taken place and the Governors are satisfied that they have explored the issue and asked any questions they may have, the Chair will then call for a recess, the complainant and the Principal/Headteacher will leave the room and this will allow the Governors to come to a decision.

The meeting will reconvene and the decision of the Committee will be read out to the parties. No further debate or discussion will take place after the announcement of the decision.

This will formally end the process and the parties will be written to informing them of the Committee decision. Actions will be taken by the Principal/Headteacher where instructed by the Committee to find redress to resolve the matters. There are no further internal stages in this procedure to follow and so the procedure is exhausted.

Conclusion

The School complaint procedure follows the general principles of 'best practice' and seeks to deal with complaints expeditiously and with equity. The final decisions and outcomes of using this procedure rest with the complaints committee, which is made up of Governors; there is no further internal recourse beyond this procedure.

THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATION FUNDING AGENCY

As the school is an Academy, the Local Authority cannot investigate complaints. The procedure for dealing with complaints after the school's Complaints Procedure has been used is to contact the Education Funding Agency (EFA) through the Department for Education website. The EFA can only look at complaints about academies that fall into the following two areas:

a) The Academy did not follow its' own complaints procedure or the Academy's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements

b) The Academy has failed to comply with a duty imposed on it under its funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education.

Reviewing/Monitoring

All Policies are reviewed on an annual basis by the MAT Directors

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Vice Principal, Healing School – A Science Academy

Governor Responsible: Chair of Personnel Committee of each school