



# MacIntyre Academies

## Quest Academy

### Complaints Policy and Procedure

Version	Purpose/Change	Responsibility	Date
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use of learner throughout</li><li>• Warwickshire Safeguarding Team telephone number updated</li><li>• Correction of grammar and spelling</li></ul>	V Scranage	Jan 2020
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replace CEO with Group Director</li><li>• Added in ELT to learner complaint procedure</li><li>• Grammatical adjustments throughout</li></ul>	V Scranage	Jan 2024

Person Responsible: Principal  
Type of policy: Statutory  
Date of First Draft: May 2017  
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Date of implementation: June 2017  
Date reviewed: February 2024  
Date of next review: February 2027

## Complaints Policy and Procedure

Quest Academy with support from the Local Advisory Board (LAB) have drawn up the following complaints procedure in the belief that it is important that families and all stakeholders are clear about the procedures to follow in making a complaint and with the assurance that any complainant will be dealt with sympathetically and speedily.

Certain types of complaint are subject to statutory procedures that are separate from this general complaint's procedure. These include:

- Admissions;
- Exclusions;
- Freedom of Information & Data Protection;
- Child Protection/Safeguarding;
- Statements of Special Educational Needs and EHC plans;
- Complaint by a member of Quest Academy staff.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the DfE Guidance: Academy Complaint Procedure. <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

Aside from the areas set out above, this procedure applies to any matter which has been raised with Quest Academy as a matter of concern but which has not been capable of resolution informally and which the complainant or Quest Academy considers should be dealt with on a formal basis.

Generally, it is expected that where the matter relates to a learner it will have been raised with the learner's class teacher, then escalating to a member of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT), then a Senior Leader before a request is made to deal with it under this policy.

It is a precondition to the operation of this procedure that the complainant shall have made reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution as set out in Step 1 below and shall have acted in relation to the matter in a reasonable and measured way. The LAB Chair shall have discretion, which will be exercised reasonably, not to allow a complaint to be pursued where this precondition has not been met.

All formal complaints will be brought to the attention of the Group Director by the relevant Academy leader.

All decisions and outcomes of any investigations will be reported to the LAB and a written record is kept of all complaints whether resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel meeting.

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 162A of the Education Act 2002 requests access to them.

### Our Complaints Procedure

We believe there is a free flow of information between home and Quest Academy but recognise there may be times when misunderstandings arise, you may be concerned about aspects of your child's progress or you may be unhappy about a particular event or activity which you have heard has taken place. In any event it is important you do not keep a problem or concern to yourself but approach Quest Academy.

#### Step 1 – (a) Informal discussion with the Form Tutor / Teacher

Before making a formal complaint, you must be clear about your concern and discuss this with an appropriate member of staff.

The first point of contact for a specific concern should always be the appropriate teacher. If you are not sure who is most appropriate, explain your concern to your learner's class teacher, who will be able to suggest whom it is best to speak to.

It is preferable if you can agree a time and place to discuss your concerns in peace and quiet rather than at a time when the teacher is possibly surrounded by other stakeholders. This could be a telephone conversation at an agreed time.

We would expect most problems to be resolved in this informal way by a frank and open discussion, free from distraction.

Please remember that all our members of staff wish to help reassure you by listening and helping you to meet with the most appropriate person.

### **Step 1 (b) – Informal discussions with a Senior Member of staff and / or the Quest Academy Principal**

Sometimes you may still feel dissatisfied with the outcome of your conversations and want to discuss the matter further with a senior member of staff or Quest Academy Principal. If you are in this situation you may wish to make an appointment with the appropriate person. An appointment will be arranged as soon as possible (usually within 10 working days).

### **Step 2 – Formal Investigation**

If, following your informal discussions you remain dissatisfied you must put your concerns in writing to the Quest Academy Principal. You must set out briefly the facts and what you consider should have been done or where Quest Academy has not met reasonable expectations. There is a form attached (Appendix 1) which may help you do this.

An investigation will be carried out by a member of the Senior Leadership Team - made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals and Business Manager- who may offer you a meeting and speak to others involved. Whenever reasonably possible, the meeting with the complainant will take place within 15 working days of the written complaint being received.

The investigator will put their findings in writing and will indicate what, if any, steps should be taken to resolve the matter. Whenever reasonably possible, this will be done within 15 working days of the meeting with the complainant.

**Please Note** : Any complaint relating to the Quest Academy Principal must be raised, in the first instance, with the Group Director of MacIntyre Academies (or the chair of the LAB) who will, if an informal resolution cannot be reached, designate a Trust senior leader to investigate in the same way as in the first stage of the formal process outlined above. Contact details of which can be found on our website.

### **Step 3 – Formal investigation by the Trust**

If the problem cannot be resolved at Step 2, you may request the complaint be considered by the Complaints Panel of the LAB which will comprise of at least three members of Trust staff and/or LAB, to include one person who is independent of the management and running of the academy.

3 (a) The complaint must be in writing, addressed to the Clerk of the LAB and be sent within 10 school days of the investigation response at Step 2. The complaint should set out precisely why you are dissatisfied and what you wish to be done.

3 (b) The Clerk will invite the academy to put in writing its response to the complainant's reasons. The academy will do this within 15 school days and at the end of that period (whether or not the academy has responded) the Clerk will convene a meeting of the Complaints Panel of the LAB. That meeting will be held as quickly as practicable given the need to find a date that is reasonably convenient for the complainant, the academy and the members of the Complaints Panel.

Whenever possible, the meeting will be held within 15 school days of the end of the academy's response time. At any meeting, the complainant will be entitled to accompaniment by a friend but legal representation will not be allowed.

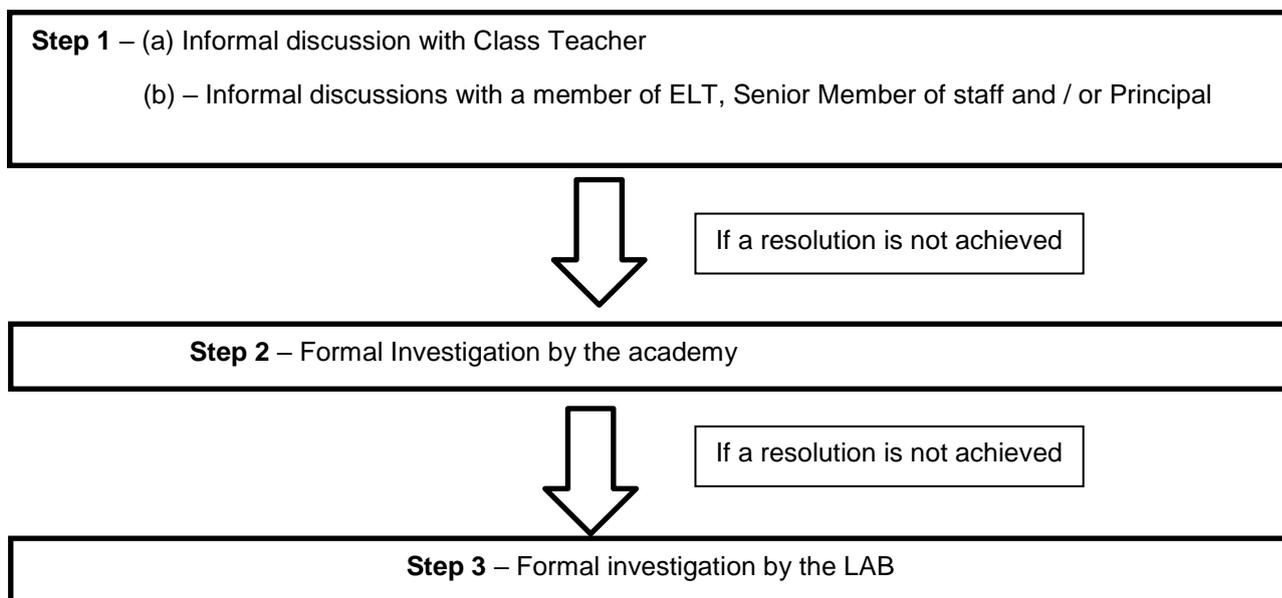
3 (c) The Complaints Panel meeting will be structured but relatively informal. The process will be explained to you in advance of the meeting. New issues may not be raised at the meeting.

3 (d) The Complaints Panel may make findings and recommendations and a copy of those findings and recommendations will be;

- (i) Sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about
- (ii) Available for inspection on the academy premises by the Academy Trust

3 (e) The Complaints Panel will formulate its response as quickly as reasonably possible, aiming to do so within 10 school days of the meeting concluding, and the Clerk to the LAB will notify all concerned.

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## Independent process

If you feel that Quest Academy has not treated you fairly, or not done what we reasonably could, you may take your complaint to the local authority that pays for the learner's place at the academy.

If your complaint is that Quest Academy is not complying with legal regulations governing independent schools, you can contact Department for Education public enquiries on 0370 000 2288, or at [www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus). The Department is happy to take information from you, but will not investigate individual complaints, only look at regulatory issues.

Ofsted is the official body for inspecting schools. It cannot investigate individual complaints, but you may contact them if you have a concern about the quality or safety of the academy:

Telephone: 0300 1234 234 Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Write to: Enquiries, National Business Unit, Ofsted, 5th, 6th and 7th Floors, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Ofsted's Whistleblowing Hotline may be contacted in three ways:

Telephone: 0300 123 3155 (Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm). Email: [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk).  
Write to: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

If you consider that a learner at Quest Academy is at risk of or being abused, you should immediately contact the Warwickshire Safeguarding Team on 01926 414144 or if it is outside working hours the Emergency Duty Team on 01926 886922.

## Recording complaints

Quest Academy will keep a written record of all complaints, which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of person making the complaint
- Name of learner(s)
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversation).

Note: **Complaint Form Action Plan** (Appendix 2)

## Confidentiality

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept for three years confidentially except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) requests access to them, or under other legal authority.

## Compliance with legislation and guidance

This procedure has been drawn up in accordance with:

- Part 7 (paragraph 25) of Schedule 1 of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010

Appendix 1



### Complaint Form

Your name:	Learner name:
Your relationship to learner:	Learner date of birth & class:
Address and postcode:	Daytime telephone number:
	Evening telephone number:
Full details of complaint (including the names of all persons involved and the dates of incidents referred to):	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint (for example, who did you speak to and what was the response)?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signature:	Date:

<b>For Office use</b>	
<i>Date acknowledgement sent:</i>	
<i>Name of person complaint referred to:</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	Position:
	Date:

## Appendix 2

## Complaint Form Action Plan – Stage 2

Date complaint referred to Principal:	
Date complaint acknowledged:	
Form of acknowledgement:	orally / letter <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>
School's complaint procedure forwarded:	Yes / No
Target date for response:	
General nature of complaint:	
Date of meeting with complainant:	
Others present:	
Statements attached:	Yes / No
Witnesses interviewed:	
Pupils interviewed in presence of:	
Date:	
Records of correspondence/telephone calls etc. attached:	Yes / No
Meeting date with complainant or date letter sent:	
Written response attached:	Yes / No
Complaint referred to Group Director:	Yes / No      Date: