



PETERBOROUGH KEYS ACADEMIES TRUST

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Version 1.1

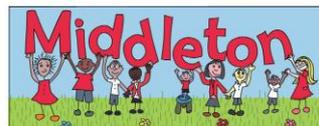
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I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1 This policy sets out the way in which the Peterborough Keys Academy Trust (“The Trust”) aims to address concerns and complaints.
- I.2 The Trust recognises that there may be times when a parent/carer, school staff member, Local Governing Body member or other stakeholder, wish to raise a concern or complaint about a particular aspect of the work of one or more of the schools within the Trust.
- I.3 Trustees wish to know as soon as possible about such concerns or cause for dissatisfaction so that the issue can be dealt with appropriately and resolved as soon as possible.
- I.4 This Complaints Policy is informed by the Independent Academy Standards Regulations 2014 and Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures (Jan 2016) published by the DfE.
- I.5 This policy may be used by:
- (a) a parent whose child attends or who has recently left a Trust school;
 - (b) members of the public or other organisations;
 - (c) a Local Governing Body Member, Trustee or Member about an employee of the Trust;
 - (d) a member of staff against an individual Local Governing Body Member, Trustee or Member;
 - (e) stakeholders for GDPR and Freedom of Information related matters where dissatisfaction is expressed with the compliance with the Trust GDPR Policy.
- I.6 This policy is not intended to apply to concerns or complaints related to the following aspects of the Trust’s work as these are covered under separate policies and procedures:
- (a) Child protection procedures;
 - (b) Appeals about admissions, complaints about fixed-term or permanent exclusions from Trust schools (further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions).
 - (c) Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use the Trust’s school premises or facilities.
 - (d) Complaints from parents of children with SEN about the Trust’s schools’ support are within the scope of this complaints procedure except for where parents have specific complaints about the Education Health and

Care Plan (EHCP), or about the content of their child's EHCP (or Statement of Special Educational Needs), they should contact Peterborough City Council via their website. This is in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice.

2. OUR AIMS

- 2.1 Complaints will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence.
- 2.2 The Trust acknowledges and will be empathetic that most complaints are 'genuinely felt' by the complainant.
- 2.3 Complaints will be investigated thoroughly and fairly with every reasonable effort made to resolve them.
- 2.4 Complaints will be dealt with in a reasonable timeframe.
- 2.5 Complainants will receive updates on the progress of complaints at each stage.
- 2.6 A full and clear written reply to formal complaints will be issued within 25 school working days (5 weeks) of the complaint being received

3. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

- 3.1 To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school or the Trust as soon as possible, and in general, no later than 2 months after the event that gave rise to the complaint.
- 3.2 Complaints should in the first instance be addressed to the appropriate school within the Trust where they relate to concerns about the activities of one of the Trust's schools.
- 3.3 Where a complaint is submitted more than six months after the incident or event (or where the complaint relates to a series of incidents or events, more than six months from the date of the latest incident or event), the Trust reserves the right to refuse to investigate the complaint under this Complaints Policy, having regard to any exceptional circumstances surrounding the complaint. The Trust reserves the right to refuse to investigate vexatious complaints.
- 3.4 All personal information or records relating to complaints will be treated in confidence and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the GDPR regulations 2018.

- 3.5 We do not respond to or investigate anonymous complaints except in extreme circumstances where the safety of a child or vulnerable adult may be compromised.
- 3.6 We reserve the right to not commence investigation until such time as any further information we feel necessary to progress the investigation has been requested and supplied to our satisfaction.

4. DIRECTING CONCERNS

- 4.1 Each school within the Trust operates its own Complaints Policy approved by the Local Governing Body aligned with the procedural parameters of this policy. Where concerns relate to the activities of one of the Trust's schools, the school Complaints Policy is to be followed. Where concerns relate to Trust-wide activities these may be directed to the Company Secretary / Clerk to the Board of Trustees.
- 4.2 If a parent or carer has a concern about any aspect of the provision for their child, they should, in the first instance, discuss it with the relevant member of staff within the school setting, for example the child's class teacher, Head of House, Form Tutor or the SENCo. This may be by letter, by telephone, by email or in person with an appointment, which can be made via the appropriate school's main office.
- 4.3 The Trust anticipates that most issues can be dealt with informally through discussion. All Trust staff work very hard to ensure that each child is happy and making good progress. They will always want to know if there is a problem and will seek to resolve the issue.
- 4.4 Where a parent/carers feels that a situation has not been resolved through discussion with the member of staff, or where there is a generic concern or complaint about the school, each school within the Trust will have a documented procedure for escalation.

If the complaint is about the school's Headteacher or a member of the Local Governing Body, it should be addressed to the Company Secretary / Clerk to the Board of Trustees for Peterborough Keys Academies Trust, for determination of who is best placed to deal with the complaint. The written complaint should:

- (a) state clearly the reason for the complaint;
- (b) state clearly which of the Trust's schools the complaint relates to, or if it relates to Trust-wide activities; and
- (c) outline the desired outcome from the complaint.

5. ALTERNATIVE CONTACTS FOR SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

5.1 There are additional levels of governance who assume responsibility under specific circumstances, specifically:

- (a) Where the complaint relates to the Chief Executive Officer, the Executive Leadership of the Trust (including the Leadership Group), or a Trustee or a Member, the Chair of the Board of Trustees assumes responsibility.
- (b) Where the complaint relates to a Local Governing Body Member, the chair of the Local Governing Body assumes responsibility.
- (c) Where the complaint relates to the chair of the Local Governing Body, the Chair of the Board of Trustees assumes responsibility.

5.2 For complaints to be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, please contact the Company Secretary / Clerk to the Board of Trustees:

Via email: estephens-dunn@pkat.co.uk

Via post: Emma Stephens-Dunn, Company Secretary / Clerk to the Board of Trustees, Peterborough Keys Academies Trust, Jack Hunt School, Bradwell Road, Peterborough, PE3 9PY

6. RECORDING COMPLAINTS

6.1 A written record will be kept of all complaints made to the Trust or to any of the Trust's schools. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State (or someone acting on his or her behalf) requests access to them.

7. FURTHER RECOURSE

7.1 The Trust anticipates that most complaints will be resolved by policies and procedures operational within its schools.

7.2 Academies operate independently of the Local Authority and, as such, the Local Authority is unable to investigate complaints regarding academies. The Trust schools in this regard are classified as Academies.

7.3 Anyone wishing to escalate a complaint about an academy, which is felt has not been satisfactorily resolved through the Trust's complaints policy or via the school's procedures, can visit <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school> for further guidance.

7.4 The Complainant should be aware that government agencies will not usually investigate the complaint itself, or interfere with the findings of the Complaint Panel, unless the decision made was manifestly unreasonable.

8. REVIEW

8.1 The Local Governing Body of each school will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of implementing procedures.

8.2 Local Governing Bodies will review their Complaints Policy in-line with the strategic intents of this Trust Policy and having due regard for the aims and values of the Trust.

8.3 The Board of Trustees will monitor this policy through feedback from Local Governing Bodies in order to schedule regular review and improvement.

9. VERSION HISTORY

9.1 Table of Versions

VERSION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE
1.0	Policy drafted	Matthew DEERE	12/07/2018
1.1	Amendments made following Trust Board review and approval on 17 July 2018	Matthew DEERE	08/08/2018

