

MANCHESTER HEALTH ACADEMY

COMPLAINTS AND PRAISE POLICY

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Approval History

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Nov 2014		V2	Policy updated and put into standard policy format	N	DO
Nov 2016		V3	Policy updated and put into standard policy format	N	DO
Nov 2018		V4	Policy updated with the deletion of D Owen and adding link to supporting document - Vexatious, Persistent and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy. Also informing protocol if the complaint is regarding the Principal.	Y	JLR

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1. Purpose

Where there are issues causing concern, pupils and parents of pupils are entitled to complain. This policy and procedure therefore provides guidance on the procedure to follow should students/parents be dissatisfied with any aspect of their child's education at Manchester Health Academy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils and parents/carers of pupils attending Manchester Health Academy.

While pupils may themselves raise concerns and complaints under this policy and procedure, should this occur, the Academy will involve parents/carers when dealing with the concerns/complaint.

3. Responsibility

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring a procedure for raising concerns and complaints is in place. The Principal then has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy and for ensuring the Academy responds appropriately to any issues raised. The Principal and all members of teaching staff/management must ensure that any concerns raised are treated seriously and dealt with appropriately.

4. Our Approach

4.1 Where there are issues causing concern, students/parents are entitled to complain and this policy and procedure will be relied upon in respect of **all complaints** by parents and pupils made against the Academy except in respect of;

- (a) **child protection allegations** where a separate policy and procedure applies; and
- (b) **exclusions** where a separate policy and procedure applies.;
- (c) **appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications** where a separate appeals procedure applies.

4.2 The Academy's complaints procedure will:

- Encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- Be easily accessible and publicised
- Be simple to understand and use
- Be impartial
- Be non-adversarial
- Allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- Ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- Respect people's desire for confidentiality
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- Provide information to the Academy's senior management team so that services can be improved.

- 4.3 The Academy expects that most concerns can be resolved informally and will use their best endeavours to resolve any complaints that are made informally, or any concerns that are raised, on that basis.
- 4.4 If informal procedures fail to resolve the issue, a formal complaint about any matter not involving child protection allegations, internal assessment decisions or a decision to exclude a pupil, must be given verbally or in writing to the Principal and will be dealt with under this Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- 4.5 Every complaint shall receive fair and proper consideration and a timely response.
- 4.6 We will do all we can to resolve concerns and to ensure parents are happy with the education their child receives at Manchester Health Academy.
- 4.7 Parents can be assured that all complaints and expressions of concern, whether raised informally or formally, will be treated seriously and confidentially.
- 4.8 Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except in so far as is required by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

5. Complaints Procedure

5.1 Stage One – Informal Resolution

- 5.1.1 It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 5.1.2 If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's teacher or Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the teacher/Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Vice Principal or the Academy Principal.
- 5.1.3 If the concern relates to the Principal, the parent is advised to contact the Chair of the Governing Body.
- 5.1.4 Complaints made directly to a Vice Principal or the Academy Principal will usually be referred to the relevant staff member or Faculty Leader unless the Vice Principal or the Academy Principal deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- 5.1.5 The Academy will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received (see Appendix A). These records will be kept for one year after the pupil leaves the Academy.
- 5.1.6 The Academy will endeavour to resolve any informal complaints within ten working days of them being raised, except where they are raised in Academy holidays or within two working days of their commencement where the Academy will endeavour to resolve them as soon as possible after commencement of the new term (usually within ten working days).
- 5.1.7 Should the matter not be resolved as referred to in paragraph 5 above, or in the event that the member of staff concerned and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance

with Stage Two of this Procedure.

5.2 Stage Two - Formal Resolution

- 5.2.1 If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis (as set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above), then parents should put their complaint in writing to the Academy Principal. Parents should also identify how they wish their complaint to be resolved.
- 5.2.2 The Principal will delegate responsibility for undertaking investigation of the complaint to a Vice Principal unless he/she deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- 5.2.3 The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- 5.2.4 In most cases, the Principal will meet or speak with the parents concerned to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- 5.2.5 The Principal will use reasonable endeavours to speak to or meet parents within ten working days of the formal complaint being received, except where the complaint is received in Academy holidays or within two working days of their commencement where the Principal will use his/her reasonable endeavours to speak or meet with parents as soon as possible after the commencement of the new term (usually within ten working days).
- 5.2.6 It may be necessary for a Vice Principal to carry out further investigations.
- 5.2.7 The Principal will keep a written record of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- 5.2.8 Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made. Parents will be informed of this decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision. The written decision should be provided no later than ten working days after speaking or meeting with parents to discuss the matter (pursuant to paragraph 10 above). The Principal may also arrange to meet with parents to explain the decision.
- 5.2.9 The Academy will keep a written record of all formal complaints, including records of meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, and the Academy's decision, which record will be kept for one year after the pupil leaves the Academy. This record will state if complaints were resolved at the preliminary hearing or if they were taken to appeal.
- 5.2.10 Where parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Academy's response to their formal complaint, the parents have the opportunity to have their complaint considered by an independent Complaints Panel.

5.3 Stage Three – Panel Hearing

- 5.3.1 If parents seek to invoke Stage Three following failure to reach an earlier resolution and where dissatisfied with the Principal's decision in respect of their formal complaint, the parents may, in writing addressed to the Clerk to the Governors, request that their complaint be further considered by an independent Complaints Panel set up for this purpose.

- 5.3.2 This request for further assessment of the complaint will, for the purposes of this Procedure, be known as an 'appeal'.
- 5.3.3 Parents must lodge their appeal in writing and within ten working days of the date of the Academy's decision made in accordance with the Stage Two Procedure. The parents should provide a list of their complaint(s) made against the Academy and which they believe to have been resolved unsatisfactorily by the Stage Two Procedure, along with the remedies sought in respect of each.
- 5.3.4 The Complaints Panel is only obliged to consider the complaint(s) lodged in this 'initial submission' although they may use their discretion to consider other relevant and related matters that may subsequently arise.
- 5.3.5 Where an appeal is received by the Academy, the Academy will, within five working days, refer the matter to the Clerk to the Board of Governors who will act as Clerk to the Complaints Panel. Where the appeal is received by the Academy during Academy holidays, or within two working days of their commencement, the Academy has five working days upon commencement of the school term to refer the matter to the Clerk.
- 5.3.6 The Clerk provides an independent source of advice on procedure for all parties.
- 5.3.7 Once an appeal has been received by the Clerk, he/she will acknowledge the appeal in writing within five working days, and inform the parents of the steps involved in this Complaints Procedure.
- 5.3.8 The Clerk will then endeavour to convene an independent Complaints Panel hearing as soon as possible to consider the matter, normally no later than twenty school days after receipt by the Academy of parents' written notice that they wish to invoke the Stage Three Procedure, dependent upon the availability of the Panel members.
- 5.3.9 The independent Complaints Panel will consist of two Governors on the Board who have not previously been involved in the complaint, and one person independent of the management and running of the school. The process used for selecting an independent person will conform to relevant guidance issued by the Department for Education. (DfE)
- 5.3.10 The following are entitled to attend a hearing, submit written representations and address the Panel:
- (a) The parent/s (or, if aged over 18, the pupil) and/or one representative;
 - (b) The Principal of the Academy and/or one representative; and
 - (c) Any other interested person whom the Complaints Panel considers to have a reasonable and just interest in the appeal and whose contribution would assist the Panel in their decision-making.

Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

- 5.3.11 Where the Complaints Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. In such cases all parties will be given the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Panel in support of their position, including:
- (a) documents in support of complaint(s),
 - (b) chronology and key dates relating to complaint(s), and
 - (c) written submission setting out the complaint(s) in more detail.

This evidence will be considered by the Panel, along with the initial submission that was lodged by the parents.

- 5.3.12 Evidence will be initially sent to the Clerk, who will then circulate the documentation to all parties, including the Panel members, along with an order of proceedings. All written evidence must be received by the Clerk no later than ten working days in advance of the hearing. The Clerk will distribute the written evidence to the relevant parties no later than five working days in advance of the Panel hearing.
- 5.3.13 It is for the Panel to decide how to conduct the proceedings of the appeal, which should be reasonably informal so that all parties can present their case effectively. If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.
- 5.3.14 After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision, and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten working days of the hearing. The decision reached by the Complaints Panel is final. Any decision reached that may have financial implications for the Academy will need the appropriate approval from the relevant authorities e.g. the Board of Governors and Academy Trust, although any such approval must be compatible with the decision of the Complaints Panel.
- 5.3.15 The Panel's findings will be sent by the Clerk in writing to the parents, the Chief Executive, the Governors, the Trust and, where relevant, the person complained of. The letter will state any reasons for the decision reached and recommendations made by the Complaints Panel.
- 5.3.16 The Academy will keep a record of all appeals, decisions and recommendations of the Complaints Panel, which record will be kept for one year after the pupil leaves the Academy.

6. Praise

- 6.1 There will be many occasions when we may wish to celebrate success within the Academy. We welcome positive feedback from students and parents and anyone who wishes to give such feedback is invited to contact the Principal directly.
- 6.2 The Academy has its own procedure for rewarding students' attainment, achievement and success in other areas of school life.

7. Availability of the Complaints and Praise Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure is available on request to pupils, the parents of pupils and prospective pupils of the Academy. While pupils may, themselves, raise concerns and complaints under this policy and procedure, the Academy will involve parents should this occur. Copies are available from;

**Principal
Manchester Health Academy
Moor Road
Wythenshawe
Manchester**

M23 9BP

Tel: 0161 998 3992

Fax: 0161 998 5144

A copy of our procedure is also available from the Academy's main office located at Reception.

8. Related Documents

Other relevant documents include:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy
- Vexatious, Persistent and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: Manchester Health Academy Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Vice Principal who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(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:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

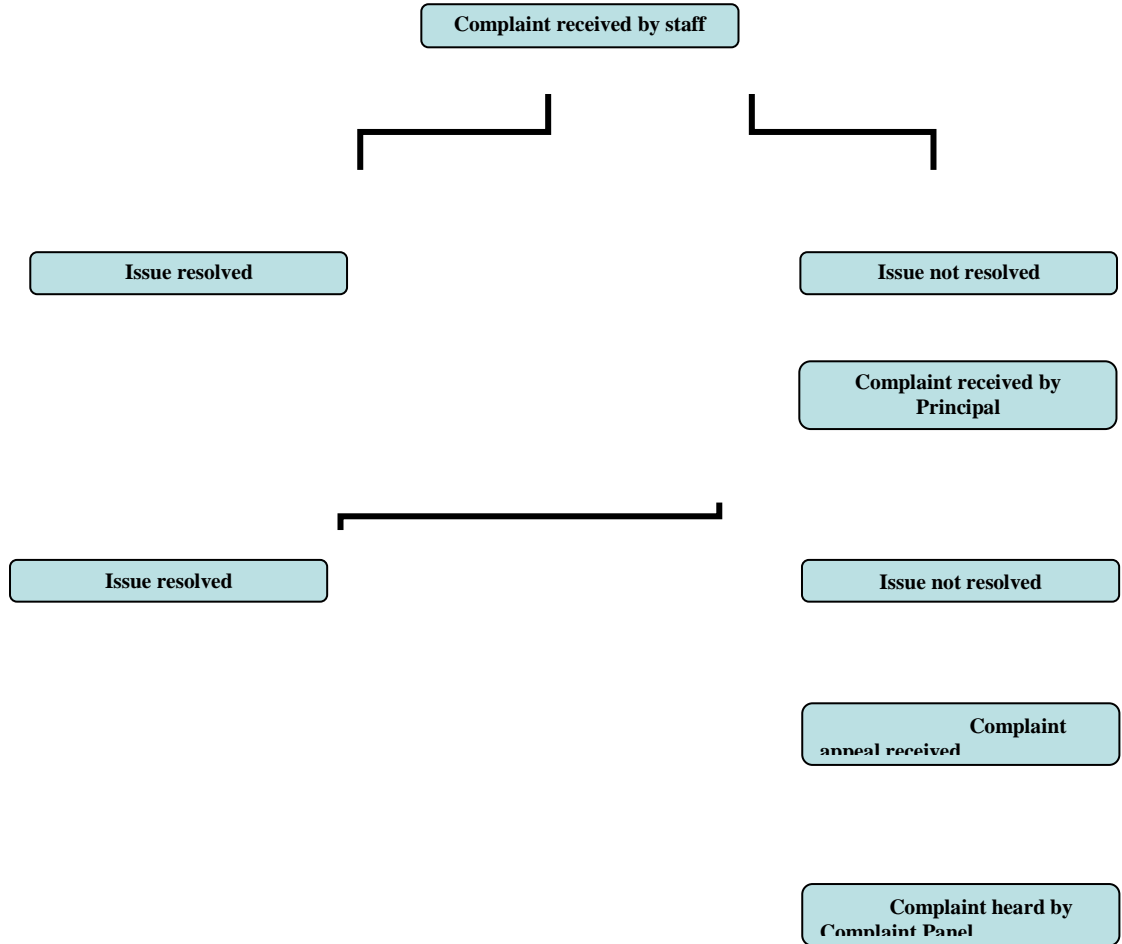
By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Appendix 2: Academy Complaints Flowchart

Summary of



Appendix 3: Complaints Procedure (Summary)

We hope that most complaints can be dealt with quickly on an informal basis. However should you wish to raise a Formal Complaint you can be assured that it will be treated seriously and confidentially.

The outline procedure for making a Formal Complaint is shown below -

Stage 1

Contact your child's teacher or Form Tutor and raise your concerns. They should be able to answer your concerns but, if not, they may consult with a Vice Principal or Principal. You will get an answer **within** 10 working days.

Stage 2

If your issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may take your concerns to the Principal.

You should **write** to them outlining your complaint and stating what action you feel needs to be taken to solve the problem.

Within 10 working days the Principal will decide upon what needs to be done. Very often they will arrange to meet with you to discuss your concerns and resolve them. It may be that a nominated senior leader (Assistant Principal) investigates the complaint initially.

Stage 3

If you feel that the Principal has not resolved your concerns you may appeal to an Independent Complaints Panel which will be set up specially to hear your appeal.

To make an appeal you should write to the Clerk to the Governors (c/o Mrs J Roddy, Manchester Health Academy) stating your reasons. You will get a written confirmation of your request within five days and the Complaints Panel will hear your appeal within twenty days from the receipt of your complaint.

A decision will be made within ten days of the Complaints Panel meeting and you will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Note: Full details of the procedures above can be found in the Manchester Health Academy Complaints and Praise Policy and Procedure Document available from Reception.