

Complaints Policy

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Policy holder:	Kim Walker
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¹ The Review Period and the Target Review Date refer to our internal policy review process. The published policy is current and is the most recent approved version

Version Control Document

Date	Version No.	Reason for Change	Author
28/11/2017	V1.0	Policy Creation	Kim Walker

Wayland Junior Academy Watton:

Complaints Policy (Part 2)

Our Values:

Wayland Junior Academy firmly believe that every child is an individual. We strive to achieve our vision: a community of adults and children who feel valued and have a passion for life- long learning which is inspired by high quality teaching and an ethos which celebrates the development of the whole child and acknowledges the achievements of all.

The following values underpin all we do:

Share and learn

Trust and honesty

Attitude and belief

Respect and understanding

Succeed and celebrate

1. Aims:

Wayland Junior Academy recognise that parents, guardians or carers play an important part in achieving our aims and values. Wayland Junior Academy is committed to ensuring the highest levels of communication and partnership with our parents through daily opportunities for face to face communication with our team of teachers, pastoral staff and leadership team in addition to the Home School Agreement. We recognise that from time to time misunderstandings can occur. This Policy is intended to address these occasions and ensure that any concerns and complaints can be resolved as quickly as possible.

This policy also aims to ensure that parents are fully aware of Wayland Junior Academy's expectation of them in relation to complaints.

Levels 1 and 2 of this procedure are informal. Persons who wish to move to the formal **levels 3 and 4** are advised to ask for Part 1 of the Complaints procedure which is available on the Academy's website and a hard copy can be provided upon request from the reception.

Complaints in the following areas have separate procedures:

Allegations of abuse against a member of staff must be reported to the Principal immediately following our Safeguarding Policy.

Admissions

Exclusions

Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs

Complaints about the curriculum including religious education and collective worship.

Please see the separate relevant policies for the above.

2. General guidance:

- The complaints procedure works sequentially.
- The views of everyone concerned should be both heard and valued.
- Confidentiality applies to all complaints.
- The needs and interests of the whole Wayland Junior Academy community needs to be considered alongside those of individual pupils.
- Issues need to be dealt with by parents, carers or guardians and the Academy as calmly, courteously and as quickly as possible.
- Academy staff must always give consideration to their own safety.
- Guidance and procedures are available regarding violence at work in Section 8 of the Children's Services Health and Safety Manual.
- Concerns and complaints should be viewed positively as data gathered can be used to inform school evaluation and future plans/ strategy.
- Parents, carers and guardians are reminded to let teachers and the leadership team know when the Academy has done something they are pleased with.
- Skills which can be used to show understanding of and to resolve the concern or issue are:
 - listening and probing for specifics.
 - clarifying ambiguities.
 - separating out multiple concerns.
 - repeating back to check understanding.
 - discussing realistic solutions.

Parents will

- Abide by the Home School Agreement.
- Engage in dialogue with Wayland Junior Academy staff regarding their complaint.
- Remain calm and courteous.
- Allow Wayland Junior Academy sufficient time to investigate and respond.
- Not gossip with other parents about the nature of the complaint and aim to ensure that confidentiality is maintained, this extends to the use of social media.

Wayland Junior Academy will:

- Abide by the Home School Agreement.
- keep a written record of any meetings that take place regarding and issue or complaint.
- Remain calm and courteous.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained.
- Aim to investigate and resolve the issue as quickly as possible seeking support and guidance from the leadership team.

Level 1: Informal.

Parents, carers or guardians should, in the first instance, make an appointment to speak to the class teacher about the concern. It is best to resolve issues at this point.

- Concerns should initially be handled informally in a manner that offers the best way of resolving issues.
- A class teacher should offer an appointment to discuss the issue as quickly as possible, as this will give both parties time to talk about it calmly and politely without being interrupted. This can allow both parties to remain calm. It will also show a commitment to resolving the issue.
- The class teacher should seek to involve a member of the leadership team for support. At this stage, this should be the Assistant Principal or Associate Leadership which includes the SENDco, Maths Lead or Pastoral Leader.
- It is important for parents/ carers/ guardians to recognise that schools are busy organisations and that it may not be possible to offer an appointment straight away.
- The parties involved should be encouraged to offer their view of what would be a realistic solution to the problem.
- The class teacher will keep a written record of the meeting.
- The Academy will aim to respond within 5 school days of the meeting.

Level 2: Informal.

Parents, carers or guardians dissatisfied with the result of the discussions with the class teacher should ask for an appointment to meet with the Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal or Principal.

If a resolution to the issue is proving difficult to find, the Principal/ Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principal can speak to a member of the Academy Council

about the issue who may be willing to offer informal intervention. However, there is no obligation for any Academy Council Member to become involved at this stage.

If everyone involved is unable to resolve the issue then it may be necessary to ask for information or support from a Children's Services Representative. The issue that is the focus of the complaint will determine the person contacted.

- It is always best to resolve issues informally at the earliest possible time but if the person is not satisfied with the result of the talk with the teacher they can ask for an appointment to meet the Principal/ Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principal.
- It is in everyone's interests, particularly the child or children, for concerns and complaints to be sorted out quickly and smoothly.
- The aim should be that discussions end on a positive note with no bad feeling.
- It is good practice for the Principal/ Deputy Principal to write a letter to the parent/ carer/ guardian summarising what has been agreed regarding the issue.
- The Principal/ Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principal may feel that a particular Academy Council Member's input would be helpful in bringing about a resolution but there is no obligation on any Academy Council Member to become involved at this level.
- Any advice sought from Children's Services will be designed to help facilitate a resolution to the problem as quickly as possible.

It is hoped that most problems will now have been resolved.

Level 3: Formal Complaint Letter to the Principal.

An issue that has not been resolved through the informal levels 1 and 2 can become an official complaint. Formal complaints will not be considered until the informal stages have been completed.

Parents, carers or guardians wishing to move to level 3 must write a formal letter of complaint to the Principal. The letter will need to set out clearly the issues which have previously been discussed and why the parent, carer or guardian considers the issue to be unresolved. This letter should be received by the Academy within 10 days of the issue.

The Principal should consider the complaint discuss a resolution with the complainant. The Principal will invite the complainant into Wayland Junior Academy. Following the meeting, the Principal should offer a resolution to the complainant in writing within 10 school days of receipt of the letter.

- An unresolved issue can now move to a formal complaint. This is a serious step to be taken. In consideration of future home/ school relationships everyone concerned will need to negotiate an agreement and concentrate on finding a resolution to the issue.

Level 4: Concerns or complaints specifically about the Principal.

The decision the Principal has made as a result of the complaint does not become a complaint about the Principal.

Parent/ Carer/ Guardian: If the complainant feels that the complaint has not been resolved they should proceed to **Level 4** which is detailed in Part 1 of the Complaints Procedure where the complainant can write to the Chair of The Academy Council.

Wayland Junior Academy: The Chair of the Academy Council will convene a panel to consider the complaint within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint. The panel will consist of 3 members all of who will not previously have been involved with the complaint. At least one of the panel members will be independent of the management and running of Wayland Junior Academy.

Parent/ Carer/ Guardian: the complainant will be invited to meet the panel person to put forward their case, parents may choose to be accompanied but must advise the Chair of the Academy Council of who they wish to invite in advance.

Wayland Junior Academy: the panel may also invite members of Wayland Junior Academy staff to attend the meeting to provide background/ further information, including details of actions taken/ recommendations offered under the earlier stages of the procedure.

Once the panel has concluded their review, a letter will be sent to the complainant stating the outcome, and any recommendations, within 5 working days: the Academy Council decision is final. A copy of this letter and any recommendations will also be sent to the person complained about, a further copy will be kept by the PA to the Principal for inspection by the Proprietor and the Principal.

Appeals

Any appeal will be heard by a panel of at least three Governors/Board Directors which will normally include the Principal/Group Chief Executive. No member of the panel will have had any prior involvement in the complaint or its investigation, and at least one will be independent of the management and running of the Academy/TEN Group.

The written appeal should set out precisely why you are dissatisfied and what you wish to be done. You will be invited to attend the panel hearing to address the panel directly and will have the right to be accompanied.

This is in addition to any written submission you make. Following the panel hearing you will be sent a formal response informing you of the decision. This process will be completed within a maximum period of 30 working/school days.

If you do not feel that your complaint has been resolved by Wayland Junior Academy:

If, after following all the steps outlined in this Policy, you are not satisfied with the way in which Wayland Junior Academy has dealt with your complaint, you can then complain to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. You should include any relevant documents with your complaint.