Limehurst Academy Policy Document

Complaints Procedure

STATUTORY

Date Approved by Governors: June 2019

Review Date: June 2020

Headteacher’s signature:

Chair of Governor’s signature:
This policy meets the standards set out in the DfE’s Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures (2019). It should be used in conjunction with Limehurst Academy’s Home/School Agreement.

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or students, are concerns rather than complaints. Limehurst Academy is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the Academy’s formal complaints procedure. For the Academy to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year it will not be investigated.

The prime aim of Limehurst Academy’s policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the Academy.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

Limehurst Academy Policy has four main stages.

In summary they are:

Stage 1: A concern is raised informally with a staff member.

Stage 2: Written complaint, heard by the Deputy Headteacher.

Stage 3: Complaint is heard by Headteacher.

Stage 4: Complaint is heard by Governing Body’s Complaints Appeal Panel.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the Academy at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The Academy requests that parents make their first contact with the Form Tutor. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 1, please write to or call the Academy within 10 Academy working days and state what you would like the Academy to do. The Academy will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by the Deputy Headteacher.

Formal complaints shall be put in writing and addressed to the Deputy Headteacher. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The Academy will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 Academy working days of receiving it. In many cases this response will also report on the action the Academy has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. This meeting will normally take place within 10 Academy working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at stage 2 please write to or call the Academy within 10 Academy working days of getting our response. You will need to tell the Academy why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the Academy to do.
**Stage 3 – Complaint heard by Headteacher**

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the Headteacher will arrange for a further investigation. Following the investigation, the Headteacher will normally give a written response within 10 Academy working days. If you are dissatisfied with the result at stage 3, you will need to let the Academy know within 10 Academy working days of getting the response.

**Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Limehurst Academy Appeal Panel**

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then you will need to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a complaints panel. This panel will normally be made up of three people not involved in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the academy. The hearing will normally take place within 10 Academy working days of the receipt of the written request for Stage 4 investigation.

The aim of the Appeal Panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the Academy and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within three Academy working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

* N.B. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last Academy-based stage of the complaints process.

If a complainant is dissatisfied about the way in which an academy has handled their complaint they should contact the DfE either: -

- via the Department for Education’s schools’ complaints form which is available at https://form.education.gov.uk
- by post to Department for Education, School Complaints Unit, 2nd Floor Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD