



Collaborate  
to Innovate

## **Policy**

### ***Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy for Parents/Carers***

**Policy Owner: Mrs T Condliffe, Trust Operations Manager (temporary)**

**Reviewed: September 2019  
Review date: September 2021**

**This policy covers compliments, complaints and concerns of a general nature raised by parents/carers.**

At The Potteries Educational Trust, we are committed to providing a high quality service for all students. We would like to hear from parents/carers if:

- They are happy with the service we provide and would like to compliment the staff and students
  - They have any suggestions about how we can improve the quality of our provision - at school or Trust level
  - They have a complaint or concern. All complaints will be taken seriously and given full and proper consideration. Where things go wrong, we aim to resolve concerns wherever possible without the need for a formal written complaint.
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### **Expressing Approval**

When things go well, it is helpful if parents/carers express their approval. Maintenance of high levels of staff commitment, morale and motivation are important in ensuring the provision of the best possible education for all students. Parents/carers can express their approval through a telephone call, email, in writing or by speaking personally to the staff concerned or the Headteacher/Principal or the CEO of the Trust.

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### **Raising A Concern – Informal Stage.**

In the first instance, parents/carers should raise their concern with the most relevant member of staff. It is anticipated that at this stage the concern would be initiated verbally. If the Headteacher/Principal is contacted at this stage it is likely that the concern will be passed to an appropriate member of staff for them to respond because they have a particular responsibility or are familiar with the circumstances of the concern. Response from an appropriate member of staff would be within ten school working days as a maximum, but ideally the school or college would wish to expedite possible resolutions as soon as possible. Most concerns will be successfully resolved at this stage. Depending on the nature of the concern, the member of staff spoken to may refer it to a more senior colleague who will initiate appropriate action.

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### **Making A Formal Complaint**

#### **Step 1 - The Headteacher/Principal**

If the parent/carer is not satisfied that their concern has been resolved informally, they should inform the Headteacher/Principal either by telephone, by email or in writing that they wish to make a formal complaint. The Headteacher/Principal will then take appropriate action and respond within 10 school days.

#### **Step 2 - The Local Governing Body**

In the unlikely event that the Headteacher/Principal cannot resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the parent then a formal complaint may be made, in writing, to the Local Academy Board. This can be done by writing to the Chair of the Board at the school address. The panel hearing will take place within 10 school days of receipt of the formal complaint. There is a form which parents can choose to fill in for this purpose (see appendix A).

The Panel will consist of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. The parents/carers may attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish. The panel will make findings and recommendations with a copy of the outcome information being provided to the complainant and, if

relevant, the person complained about. Written records will be maintained of all complaints, including details of how they are resolved, and the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint. Records relating to individual complaints will remain confidential except under certain circumstances including Secretary of State request and inspection.

You will receive a written response from the Local Academy Board within 10 school days.

### **Step 3 - The Potteries Educational Trust**

In the highly unlikely event that the parent/carer is not satisfied that their complaint has been considered properly and reasonably by the Local Academy Board, then the matter can be raised with the Trust. However, it should be noted that The Potteries Educational Trust will not, unless circumstances are truly exceptional, overturn a decision of the Local Academy Board. It is important to realise that this is not a general right for any parent who disagrees with the Local Boards' decision.

### **Step 4 - PET Trust Head Office Complaints**

- If a complaint is sent to Head Office, the Trust will refer to this policy and ensure it is forwarded to the relevant academy.
- If the complaint relates directly to the Head Office, the complaint will be passed to the CEO for review.
- If the complaint relates to the CEO it will be passed to the Chair of the Board for review and investigation.

### **Step 5 - The Role of the Education Funding Authority.**

Should the complainant still remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint after Stage 3, the complainant is able to refer the matter to the Education and Skills Funding Authority, who will consider whether the school followed an appropriate procedure in dealing with the complaint.

**Education & Skills Funding Agency, Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT.**

In your letter please explain:

1. What your complaint to the governors was
2. What response they have made to it
3. Why you think that the governors have not followed a proper procedure in considering your complaint, and/or
4. Why you think that their consideration of it was unreasonable.

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### **Notes:**

- ❖ **This policy does not apply where the complaint may lead to disciplinary proceedings against a teacher or child protection procedures. These matters have separate procedures.**
- ❖ **Whilst it is appreciated that matters may not come to light immediately, the Trust and its schools will be unable to effectively investigate and therefore resolve complaints relating to historical matters.**
- ❖ **Complainants have a responsibility to act with civility and rationality before, during and after they raise a complaint. The Trust can invoke its Vexatious Complaints Policy in the event that a complainant falls short of these expectations.**

## Appendix A

### Complaints and Compliments

Please complete this form this form and return it to the school who will then forward it to the Chair of the Local Academy Board. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

1. **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Telephone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Name of Child** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Details of the complaint/compliment.** Please include the date or period of time to which complaint/compliment relates and confirm whether you have already expressed your concerns informally, and to whom and when.

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7. **Do you have a suggestion for change?**

Please attach copies of any more information you have to back up your complaint such as letters or report.

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**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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