



LONDON ACADEMY
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SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Mission statement

#We are the Future

- To empower children with 21st century skills.
- To provide a happy, safe, and caring environment in which all individuals feel connected and respected thus empowering them to reach their fullest potential.
- To promote learning through project-based learning and technology-based tools.
- To deliver an exciting and vibrant curriculum while having serious fun.
- To enrich the curriculum with extra-curricular activities and physical learning environments.
- To encourage each child to develop high self-esteem and, in doing so, learn to respect others.
- To be partners with parents and families to share the responsibility for developing their children educationally, morally, spiritually, and socially.

Date of adoption by the school Summer 2022

Policy Review Summer 2022

Responsible staff: Yakine Al Ali



Rationale

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to London Academy about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. London Academy aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to ensuring all complaints are managed sympathetically and efficiently.

Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether formally or informally, and the appropriate procedures will be implemented. This policy has been created to deal with any complaint against a member of staff, or the school as a whole, relating to any aspects of the school or the provision of facilities or services.

The school will ensure the complaints procedure is:

- Easily accessible and publicised on the school's website.
- Simple to understand and put into practice.
- Impartial and fair to all parties involved.
- Respectful of confidentiality duties.
- Continuously under improvement, using information gathered during the procedure.
- Fairly investigated, by an independent person when necessary.
- Used to address all issues to provide appropriate and effective responses where necessary.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. The vast majority of items raised are concerns and are dealt with informally, through discussions, meetings, support and or explanations.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaint's procedure. London Academy takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Head of School will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Head of School will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important. We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, London Academy will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaint's procedure.



1. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- A “**complaint**” can be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction’ towards the actions taken or a perceived lack of action taken.
- A “**concern**” can be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt’ where reassurance is required.
- “**Complainants**” are those who have raised a concern or a complaint.
- A “**grievance**” is an issue raised by a member of staff where they feel the school has not implemented a policy or process fairly or properly. Grievances will be dealt with in line with the school’s Grievance Policy.
- For the purpose of this policy, concerns will be classed and addressed as complaints.
- For the purpose of this policy, “**days**” relate to school days.

2. Eligibility to make a complaint

Parents (including individuals with parental responsibility) of pupils currently being educated at the school are able to make a complaint in line with this policy.

All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Parents will be assured that their children will not be penalised if they raise a complaint.

This policy does not cover complaints made by the following:

- Parents of pupils who have left voluntarily or as a result of being excluded (except where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at the school)
- Pupils
- Prospective pupils and their parents, and the failure to admit such pupils

3. Timescales

Complaints are expected to be made as soon as possible after an issue arises to ensure the issue is addressed in an appropriate timescale.

The school upholds a three-month limit in which a complaint can be lodged following an incident. Complaints made outside this time limit will not be automatically refused and exceptions will be considered.

Timescales for managing complaints at specific stages are outlined in the relevant sections of this policy. In the case of any timescales changing, all parties involved will be informed of the changes in a timely manner.

4. Stage 1 – informal raising of a concern



The school expects that most concerns can be resolved informally.

Concerns should be raised initially as follows:

- Educational issues – raise the concern with the relevant teacher. The concern will be passed to a more senior member of staff if appropriate.
- Pastoral care – raise the concern with the headteacher.
- Behaviour – raise the concern with the staff member who imposed the behaviour sanction.
- Financial matters – raise the concern with the headteacher.
- Other concerns – raise the concern with the headteacher.

A complaint may be made in person, by telephone or in writing. A written record will be kept of all concerns and the date on which they were received. A concern provided in writing will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within three days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during school holidays.

If the concern is not resolved within one week or, in the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their concern, the complainant will be advised to proceed in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

5. Stage 2 – formal complaint

The complainant should submit their complaint in writing to the headteacher. The complaint will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within three days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during school holidays, indicating that action is being taken and the likely timescales.

The headteacher will meet with the complainant within one week of acknowledging receipt of the complaint to discuss the matter. If the complaint is about the headteacher, the discussion will take place with the chair of the proprietorial body.

During the meeting, the headteacher will attempt to reach a resolution; however, it may be necessary for further investigations to be carried out by the headteacher or another designated member of staff. If the complaint is about the headteacher, the chair of the proprietorial body will arrange any necessary investigations.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and other communications held in relation to the complaint. Once all facts are established, the headteacher will inform the complainant of their decision and their reasoning in writing.

If the complaint is about the headteacher, the COO will inform the complainant of their decision and their reasoning in writing.

The complainant will be informed of the decision within ten days from the receipt of the complaint. Where there is a delay, the complainant will be notified of this and informed of the new timescales as soon as possible.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome suggested, they will be passed to the COO for a final decision.

6. Recording complaints

A written record will be kept of any complaint made, detailing:



- Whether the complaint was resolved following an informal route, formal route or panel hearing.
- Actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

Additional records may be kept containing the following information:

- The date the issue was raised
- The name of the complainant and, where relevant, their child
- A description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations
- Witness statements
- The name of the staff member responsible for handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of correspondence on the issue

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills 2008 Act requests to access them.

7. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually. All changes made to this policy will be communicated with all relevant stakeholders.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or Head of School. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint. Complainants should not approach individual members from the Board of Advisers to raise concerns or complaints. If you wish to put your complaint in writing, please mark it as Private and Confidential. Complaints that involve or are about the head teacher should be addressed to the Chief Operation Officer.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the head teacher or COO, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

As well as the timescales provided above, LAR will endeavour to resolve the matter as early as possible, however, the complaint must be raised within 1 week of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within 1 month of the last of



these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame only if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, London Academy wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made.
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- An apology.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

FORMAL Complaints Procedure

Formal complaints must be made to the Head of School (unless they are about the Head of School in which case, they should be addressed to the Chief Operation Officer). This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone. The Head of School records the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days. Within this response, the Head of School will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Head of School can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Head of School may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's leadership team but not the decision to be taken. During the investigation, the Head of School (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head of School will provide a formal written response within 20 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint (1 month). If



the Head of School is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions that London Academy will take to resolve the complaint. The Head of School will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint and a complaints committee will be formed and a meeting with members of the committee will be held. This is the final stage of the complaint's procedure. A request to escalate the complaint must be made to the COO within 5 working days of receipt of the response. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply. The committee will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the dissatisfaction of the outcome of the complaint. If this is not possible, the committee will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed. If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the committee will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties. The complaints committee will consist of at least three members with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee.

