



3.0	February 2022	27 th May 2022	February 2025

Version	Date	Author	Reason for change
V1.0	March 2017		
V2.0	December 2019	AE	Full review taking on new LwLAT policy formats and changes in legislation, including feedback received from Academies Name changed to Complaints Policy. Academy logos updated.
V3.0	February 2022	AE	Contents table added.

1.	Aims of this policy.....	4
2.	Definitions.....	4
3.	Scope of this policy	4
4.	Purpose of this policy	5
5.	Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?	5
6.	Legislation and guidance	5
7.		

10.	Stage 1: Informal Resolution	7
11.	Stage 2: Formal Investigation	8
11.3.	Addressing your complaint	8
11.4.	Investigation	8
12.	Stage 3: Local Governing Body Panel Hearing	9
13.	Stage 4: Review by the Trust Board	10
13.7.	Investigation	10
14.	Complaints about the Trust or Central Staff	10
14.2.	Stage 1: Informal Resolution	10
14.3.	Stage 2: Formal Investigation	10

This policy outlines the process for complaints from parents, carers and members of the public. The aim of this policy is to ensure that any complaint, including a complaint against a member of staff, is handled by the Learning without Limits Academy Trust sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level, and resolved as soon as possible.

When responding to complaints, the Trust aims to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
-

- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters
- Exclusion
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use Academy premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

The Trust needs to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. Parents, carers and members of the public should never feel, or be made to feel, that a complaint, made in a reasonable and appropriate way, will reflect adversely on any student or their opportunities at any Academy within the Trust. The Trust will investigate and try to resolve every complaint in a positive manner and will treat every complaint as an opportunity:

- To put right any matter which may have gone wrong
- To review our systems and procedures in the light of the relevant circumstances

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for this policy, and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken in response to concerns raised under this policy.

The Trust Board has delegated the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of these procedures to the Academy Principal.

This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which states that we must have and make available a written procedure to deal with complaints from parents of pupils in our Trust.

It is also based on guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on [creating a complaints procedure that complies with the above regulations](#), and refers to [good practice guidance on setting up complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, this policy addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework with regards to dealing with complaints about the Trust's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

7.1.1. The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- o Follow these procedures
- o Co-operate with the Trust and its Academies throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- o Ask for assistance as needed
- o Treat all those involved with respect
- o Not publish details about the complaint on social media

7.2.1. An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint, and establish the facts. They will:

- o Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- o Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- o Prepare a comprehensive report which includes the facts and potential solutions

7.3.1. The clerk will:

- o Be the contact point for the complainant and the complaints committee, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints committee meetings
- o Arrange the complaints hearing
- o Record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing

7.4.1. The committee chair will:

- o Chair the meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout
- o Make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the committee, and are allowed to present their case

8.1.1. When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- o What has happened
- o Who was involved
- o What the complainant feels would put things right

We also intend to address complaints as quickly as possible. To achieve this, realistic and reasonable time limits will be set for each action within each stage.

- Amendments to provision or practice
- Provision of additional support or guidance
- Mediation
- Conflict resolution

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to a formal complaint.

The formal stage involves the complainant putting the complaint into writing. This should provide details such as:

- Relevant dates and times
- The names of witnesses of events
- What the complainant

- 11.4.4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to proceed to the next stage of this procedure, they should inform the investigating officer in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the written conclusion. Complaints will be escalated to the panel hearing stage if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint at the second, formal, stage.

- Letter: for the attention of the clerk to the Board of Trustees sent to the Learning without Limits Academy Trust, c/o Lancaster Academy, Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6FU.

The written request should include a summary of why the complainant wishes to escalate the complaint to Stage 4.

The Trust will only investigate complaints where:

- The Academy did not comply with the complaints procedure
- The Academy or Trust's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements
- The Academy has failed to comply with a duty imposed under its funding agreement

The Trust cannot overturn decisions on complaints made during the Trust's complaints procedure. However, it can assess whether the Academy considered the complaint appropriately.

If it is found that the Academy did not address a complaint appropriately, or that statutory requirements were not met, the Trust will require the complaint to be reconsidered within 10 working days. This also applies where adjustments must be made to the complaints procedure to bring it in line with statutory requirements.

13.4.1. Where a complaint is raised with the Trust, the Trustg3 (lai3.3 (n)-0.7 (t)-6 (s)-4H)(c)8.9 98 (w)-33

14.2.2. The complainant should raise any issues as soon as possible with the relevant member of the Trust's central team, or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

14.2.3.

- 14.4.7. At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence.
- 14.4.8. The panel, the complainant and the Trust representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and Trust representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered.
- 14.4.9. The panel must then put together its findings and recommendations from the

- The complainant is contacting the Academy or Trust repeatedly for

16.8.3. If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

16.9.1. Where the Academy or Trust receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the Academy or Trust, the Academy or Trust may respond to these complaints by:

- o Publishing a single response on the Academy or Trust website
- o Sending a template response to all of the complainants

16.9.2. If complainants are not satisfied with the Academy's or Trust's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

The Academy will record the progress of all complaints brought against it, including information about:

- Actions taken at all stages
- The stage at which the complaint was resolved
- The final outcome

The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes related to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential, stored securely in an Academy office and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

In the case of complaints about the Trust or central staff, these records will be managed by the clerk to the Board of Trustees and will be stored securely in the Trust's offices under restricted access.

This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during an Academy inspection.

Records of complaints will be kept for in accordance with s999985 265.7999811 cm/lm5 DoBT/TT2 1 Tf11.0.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the local governing body, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

The Trust CEO will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Principal, where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any