



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

Review Date:	July 2008	Last review date:	N/A
Policy Adopted:	August 2007	Next review date:	TBD

This Policy incorporates the Academy's vision and core values.

Introduction:

Spires Academy wants everyone to be happy, feel safe and achieve well. However, we recognise that there will be times when people will be unsure or unhappy about something that we do.

The information below sets out what you should do if you have a complaint as well as the procedures we will follow once you have contacted us. It is important to us that we respond to people's concerns as quickly and effectively as possible.

No matter who deals with your complaint, all correspondence, statements and records of complaints will be kept confidential. There will be a written record maintained at all times, which will indicate whether a complaint was resolved at an informal stage or whether it went to the Chair of Governors and an independent panel. This record will be kept for five years.

Purpose and objectives: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints (should they arise) are handled sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level, and resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is:

- good for relationships
- good education practice
- good business practice.

Policy Statement:

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. Parents and students should never feel - or be made to feel - that a complaint, made in a reasonable and appropriate way, will be taken amiss or will reflect adversely on the student or his/her opportunities at Spires Academy. We 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.

We recognise that a complaint which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, damaging to relationships and also to our internal culture. Therefore we try to resolve all matters at an informal level if possible.

Procedures

Complaints Form: Every concern or complaint notified to a member of staff must be written down, together with the action taken, on a standard form known as a 'Complaints Form'. A sample of the form is attached to this policy.

Acknowledgement: A formal complaint in writing will be acknowledged by telephone on the date of receipt if practicable or in writing within three working days. A letter of acknowledgement will state the action being taken and the likely time scale.



Designated Officer: The Head of School has appointed a Deputy Head of School - Inclusion ('Designated Officer') to be responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. If the Designated Officer is unavailable or is himself the subject of the complaint, their duties will be carried out by the Head of School or another Deputy Head of School. The main responsibilities of the Designated Officer are:

- to be the first point of contact while the matter remains unresolved
- to co-ordinate the complaint procedures in the Academy
- to maintain an ongoing training programme for all Academy employees in relation to complaints
- to monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to complaints
- to report regularly to the Head of School with respect to complaints.

Duty Officer: At all times when the Academy is open, a senior member of staff is designated the **Duty Officer** with authority to take decisions relating to most matters of pastoral care and discipline. The Duty Officer can be contacted by Main Reception staff.

How to Complain informally

- **Education Matters:** If the concern relates to the classroom, the curriculum or special educational needs please speak or write to the teacher in the first instance or to the appropriate Director of Learning.
- **Pastoral Care:** If the concern relates to matters outside the classroom, please speak or write to the Student Support Manager or Deputy Head of School in the appropriate mini-school. **A concern about the safety of your child should be notified immediately to the Designated Officer.**
- **Disciplinary Matters:** A concern about a disciplinary sanction should be raised first of all with the member of staff who imposed it and if not resolved, with the Duty Officer.
- **Financial Matters:** A concern or complaint about a matter relating to financial matters should be stated in writing to the Business Manager.
- **Fixed Term/Permanent Exclusion:** Parents who are aggrieved by a decision of the Head of School/Executive Head to permanently exclude a student have the rights of representation and appeal as outlined in the Exclusion Policy (this will be sent to parents of any child permanently excluded).

An informal complaint will be acknowledged by telephone within 24 hours or in writing within three working days. The response will indicate the process to be taken to resolve the complaint and the timescale by which the matter will be resolved.

If a Complaint is not resolved satisfactorily: A person who is dissatisfied with an aspect of the Academy's policies, procedures, management or administration should write to the Head of School or Executive Head with details of the complaint. This will constitute a formal complaint. The Head of School will investigate and will do her best to resolve the dispute. A formal complaint in writing will be acknowledged by telephone on the date of receipt if practicable or in writing within three working days. A letter of acknowledgement will state the action being taken and the likely time scale.



- ***If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved:*** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, s/he should renew his complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors. The Chair may:
 - investigate the matter himself or delegate the investigation to another governor
 - request a meeting with the complainant who may be represented by a legal or other representative
 - when he is satisfied that he has all necessary information, give his decision in writing
 - convene a panel of governors to hear the complaint. The Complaints Committee will consist of three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint to review the complaint. There will be at least one person on the panel who is independent of the running or management of Spires Academy. The Governing Body will appoint a clerk to the Complaints Committee to provide advice on the complaints process and to handle the administrative arrangements for considering complaints. The complainant may be represented by a legal or other representative.

The outcome of any complaint will be notified to the complainant, the person complained about (where relevant), Head of School, Executive Head, Chair of Governors in writing, giving reasons for any findings and recommendations.

- ***If you remain unsatisfied:*** You have the right to complain directly to the government if you remain dissatisfied with the way Spires Academy has dealt with your issues.
Write to:
*Secretary of State for Education
Department for Children, Schools and Families
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT*



Spires Academy

COMPLAINTS FORM

This form should be made available on request to any person who wishes to make a complaint. It should be passed to the Deputy Head of School - Inclusion

1. What is the nature of the complaint? (Please tick)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Conduct: | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental Conduct: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Standards : | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Condition of Premises: | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Tabling: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matters of Regime and Routine: | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to or Regulation of Extra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please give details): | <input type="checkbox"/> Curricular Activities: |

2. Please give details of your complaint:

Date/s of Incident:

Time/s:

3. If you are complaining about someone's behaviour please give the names of any witnesses to the incident/s:

4. Action Taken:

Name:

Contact Details:

Signed:

Date: