



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

2026-2027

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Everything Education School

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1.0 PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

Everything Education School is committed to providing a high-quality education and a safe, respectful environment. We welcome concerns and complaints as an opportunity to put matters right, learn from experience and improve our practice.

The procedure is intended to be clear, fair, accessible, impartial and non-adversarial. Wherever possible, concerns should be resolved promptly and informally, while preserving a parent/carer's right to progress a complaint through the full formal procedure where they remain dissatisfied.

2.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This procedure is designed to meet Part 7 of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Department for Education Independent School Standards guidance updated in April 2026. In particular, the school will maintain a written procedure that is available to parents, has clear timescales, provides informal and formal stages, provides a panel hearing with at least three members including one person independent of the management and running of the school, permits a parent to attend and be accompanied, records formal complaints and outcomes, and protects confidentiality subject to statutory inspection or Secretary of State access.

3.0 SCOPE

This statutory procedure applies to complaints from parents/carers of pupils currently registered at Everything Education School about the provision of education or other matters for which the school is responsible. The school may also use the same principles, where appropriate, to respond to concerns from pupils, referrers or commissioners.

Complaints about admissions decisions for prospective pupils, staff grievances or disciplinary matters, safeguarding referrals, whistleblowing, data-protection rights, and other matters governed by a separate statutory or school procedure will be directed to the appropriate process.

4.0 ACCESSIBILITY AND SUPPORT

- Parents/carers may ask for reasonable adjustments to enable them to use this procedure, including communication support or an alternative format.
- A complainant may be supported by a friend, advocate or other appropriate person. At a panel hearing, a parent/carer may attend and be accompanied if they wish.
- Complaints will be handled sensitively and, where appropriate, in a way that takes account of SEND, disability, language or communication needs.
- No pupil will be disadvantaged because a parent/carer has made a complaint in good faith.

5.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE - OVERVIEW

Three-stage procedure

Stage 1: informal resolution. Stage 2: formal written complaint. Stage 3: complaints panel hearing. A parent/carer who remains dissatisfied after a stage may progress to the next stage.

5.1 Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

A concern should normally be raised with the member of staff most directly involved or with the Headteacher. The school will listen to the concern, establish the relevant facts and seek a practical resolution.

- The school will acknowledge an informal concern as soon as reasonably practicable, normally within 2 school days.
- Where possible, the matter will be discussed and resolved within 5 school days. If more time is required, the complainant will be told the reason and given a revised timescale.
- The outcome may be communicated verbally or in writing depending on the nature of the concern. The complainant will be told how to progress to Stage 2 if dissatisfied.

5.2 Stage 2 - Formal Written Complaint

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, or the matter is sufficiently serious to require a formal response, the complaint should be made in writing to the Headteacher. The complaint should set out the relevant facts, dates, people involved, steps already taken and the outcome sought. The form at Appendix 1 may be used but is not mandatory.

- The school will acknowledge receipt normally within 3 school days.
- The complaint will be investigated by a person who can act impartially and who is not the subject of the complaint. The investigator may meet the complainant, pupil and relevant staff and review appropriate records.
- A written Stage 2 response will normally be issued within 10 school days of acknowledgement. Where the investigation is complex or delayed by school closure, the complainant will be given a revised completion date.
- The response will summarise the issues considered, the findings, any actions or recommendations, and how to request a Stage 3 panel hearing if the complainant remains dissatisfied.

Complaints should be raised as soon as reasonably practicable. The school will not impose a rigid time limit where this would prevent a fair consideration of a genuine complaint, although delay may affect the availability of evidence.

5.3 Stage 3 - Complaints Panel Hearing

A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the Stage 2 response may request a panel hearing in writing. The request should identify the points that remain unresolved and the outcome sought.

- The school will acknowledge the request normally within 3 school days and will arrange the hearing as soon as reasonably practicable, normally within 15 school days. Where this is not possible, a revised date will be agreed or explained.
- The panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one panel member will be independent of the management and running of Everything Education School.
- The parent/carer may attend and may be accompanied. The school may also invite relevant staff or witnesses where this assists the panel.
- Relevant documents will normally be shared with the panel and the parties in advance, subject to safeguarding, data-protection and third-party confidentiality considerations.
- The panel will consider the complaint fairly, may ask questions, and will reach findings and recommendations on the evidence available.

6.0 COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE HEADTEACHER OR PROPRIETOR

A formal complaint about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of the proprietor body, who will arrange for an appropriate person with no direct involvement in the matter to manage Stage 2. A complaint about a proprietor/director should be managed by another proprietor/director or an appropriately independent person who has not been directly involved. Any Stage 3 panel must still meet the independence and no-prior-involvement requirements set out above.

7.0 PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The panel will make findings and may make recommendations.
- A written copy of the findings and recommendations will normally be issued within 5 school days of the hearing.
- The written outcome will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.
- The findings and recommendations will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Headteacher.
- The panel hearing is the final stage of the school's internal complaints procedure.

8.0 RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

The school will keep a written record of all complaints made at the formal stage, whether they are resolved at Stage 2 or proceed to a panel hearing, together with action taken by the school as a result, regardless of whether the complaint is upheld.

- 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 Act 2008 requests access, or where disclosure is otherwise required by law.
- Complaint records will be retained and handled in accordance with the school's data-protection and records-retention arrangements.
- The school will make available the number of formal complaints registered during the preceding school year in accordance with the Independent School Standards information requirements.

9.0 SAFEGUARDING AND OTHER PROCEDURES

A complaint that indicates a child may be at risk of harm will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and handled in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The complaints procedure must not delay safeguarding action, referral to children's social care or contact with the police where required.

Where a complaint concerns staff conduct, whistleblowing, data protection, examination appeals or another matter governed by a separate procedure, the school will explain which procedure applies. This does not prevent relevant aspects of a parent complaint from being considered under this procedure where appropriate.

10.0 PERSISTENT OR UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR

The school will distinguish between a complaint that is persistent and behaviour by a complainant that is unreasonable. A complainant will not be prevented from completing the three-stage procedure merely because they are persistent. Where behaviour becomes abusive, threatening, discriminatory or excessively disruptive, the school may set proportionate communication arrangements while ensuring that the substance of any unresolved complaint can still be considered fairly.

11.0 MONITORING AND LESSONS LEARNED

- The Headteacher and proprietors will review formal complaints and outcomes to identify recurring themes, risks and opportunities for improvement.
- Actions arising from complaints will be allocated, monitored and reviewed where appropriate.
- Complaint information will be used carefully so that learning is captured without breaching confidentiality.

12.0 FURTHER ESCALATION

Once the school's internal procedure has been completed, a parent/carer who believes the school is failing to meet the Independent School Standards may raise the matter with the Department for Education. The Department for Education does not normally reinvestigate the merits of an individual complaint about an independent school, but it may consider information relevant to its regulatory functions and the Independent School Standards.

Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, complainants should contact the appropriate safeguarding agency or emergency service rather than wait for the complaints procedure to conclude.

13.0 PUBLICATION AND REVIEW

- This procedure will be made available to parents/carers and published or otherwise made readily accessible in accordance with the Independent School Standards.
- Staff with responsibilities under the procedure will be made aware of the stages, timescales and record-keeping requirements.
- This procedure will be reviewed at least annually and may be reviewed sooner if legislation, regulatory guidance or school arrangements change.

RELATED POLICIES

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Charter
- Admissions, Attendance and Exclusions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Data Protection / Privacy arrangements
- Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing procedures

APPENDIX 1 - COMPLAINTS FORM

This form may be used for a Stage 2 formal complaint. A complaint does not have to be submitted on this form provided the required information is supplied in writing.

Name of complainant	
Name of pupil and relationship to pupil	
Contact details	
Date complaint submitted	
What is the complaint about?	
Relevant dates, events and people involved	
What steps have already been taken to resolve the matter?	
What outcome would you like?	
Documents or evidence attached	
Signature / name	
Date	

APPENDIX 2 - PROCEDURE SUMMARY

Stage	Who leads	Typical timescale	Outcome / next step
1 - Informal	Relevant staff / Headteacher	Acknowledge promptly; aim to resolve within 5 school days	Resolution or information on how to progress to Stage 2
2 - Formal	Headteacher or appropriate impartial person	Acknowledge normally within 3 school days; written response normally within 10 school days	Written findings/actions and right to request Stage 3
3 - Panel	Panel of at least 3; one independent member	Arrange as soon as reasonably practicable, normally within 15 school days	Written findings/recommendations normally within 5 school days; internal procedure complete

Note: where a complaint concerns the Headteacher or a proprietor, the complaint will be allocated to an appropriate person who has not been directly involved. Safeguarding concerns are referred immediately through safeguarding procedures and are not delayed by this complaints process.