

# Creating Tomorrow Trust

## Complaints Procedures



### ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

#### **Purpose**

These procedures are in place to enable any complaint to be raised in the appropriate way so that they can be resolved as quickly and efficiently as practically possible.

|  |  |
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| <b>Complied by:</b> KLatham Oct 19. EBushell<br>Mar 23 - <i>Reviewed in line with DfE guidance</i> | <b>Date:</b> March 2023                  |
| <b>Committee:</b> Trust Board  | <b>Date agreed by Trustees:</b> Apr 2023 |
| <b>Review Cycle:</b> 2 Years   | <b>Review Date:</b> March 2025           |

# Creating Tomorrow Trust

## Complaints Procedures

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# Creating Tomorrow Trust

## Complaints Procedures

### 1. Aims

Our Trust aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of children at our schools, and from other people or professionals.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We will try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

Creating Tomorrow Trust will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the Trust website and those of each school.

Throughout the process we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

This policy aims to promote and embed the core values of Creating Tomorrow Trust:

- Respect
- Inclusion
- Achievement

Our core values define how we expect everyone within the Trust to conduct themselves on a day-to-day basis and act as a guide to ensure safe, positive and professional behaviour. The trust expects everyone (including those not employed by Creating Tomorrow Trust) to be treated with respect and dignity and will not tolerate aggressive behaviour, either verbal or physical.

Relationships are at the heart of everything we do, and the quality of relationships is a strong factor underpinning any concern or complaint. Through building positive relationships we hope that we be able to manage any concern or complaint quickly to ensure effective working is resumed and so to benefit everyone.

Across the trust we work to develop:

- Relationship with self;
- Relationship with others;
- Relationship with the curriculum.

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### 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements set out 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 at the school.

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.

This document meets the requirements of the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011, which states that non-maintained special schools must have, and make available, a written procedure to deal with complaints relating to their school.

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

### 3. Definitions and scope

#### 3.1 Definitions

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:

- A **concern** is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”. Our schools will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible
- A **complaint** is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”

#### 3.2 Scope

Creating Tomorrow Trust intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does **not** cover complaints procedures relating to the following:

| Exceptions   | Who to contact   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions to schools</li> </ul>                                      | Concerns about admissions should be directed to the relevant local authority where the child resides.  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul> | <p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).</p> <p>For our Northamptonshire schools:</p> |

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|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Designated Officer for North Northamptonshire, Sheila Kempster can be contacted on 07831 123193</li> <li>➤ Designated Officer for West Northamptonshire, Andy Smith can be contacted on 07850 854309.</li> <li>➤ For urgent child safeguarding matters please contact MASH on 0300 126 7000.</li> </ul> <p>For Windmill Hill School in Luton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Designated Officer can be contacted on <b>01582 548069</b>.</li> <li>➤ For urgent child safeguarding matters, please contact the MASH on <b>01582 547653</b>.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion of children from school*</li> </ul> | <p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the relationship policy in any of our schools can be made through this complaints procedure.</i></p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing</li> </ul>                     | <p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistle-blowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through this complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff grievances</li> </ul>                   | <p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the Trust's internal grievance procedures.</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff conduct</li> </ul>                      | <p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the Trust's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>   |

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents in regards to the school's support for their child's SEN needs are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the headteacher; they will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEN policy and information report includes information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.

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

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### 4. Roles and responsibilities

#### 4.1 Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with the school or Trust in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

#### 4.2 Investigator

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report for the head teacher or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.
- The head teacher or complaints committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

#### 4.3 Complaints Co-ordinator

*(Each complaint will be allocated a Complaints Co-ordinator. This will be the most appropriate colleague depending on the nature of the complaint)*

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- liaise with staff members, head teacher, CEO, Chair of Governors, Chair of Trust or the Clerk and to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
  - sharing third party information
  - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person

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- keep records.

#### **4.4 Clerk to the Governing Body / Trust Board**

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example: stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- record the proceedings
- circulate the minutes of the meeting
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

#### **4.5 Committee Chair**

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted

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- they liaise with the Clerk (and complaints co-ordinator, if the school has one).

#### 4.6 Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so
- No governor / trustee may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant
- We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.
- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting
- Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting
- Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.
- The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.
- If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.
- However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.
- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

## 5. Principles for investigation

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
  - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
  - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
  - consideration of records and other relevant information
  - analysing information
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.



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### 5.1 Time scales

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the next school day.

If at any point we cannot meet the time scales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations. If this happens, we will inform you of a proposed new timescale.

If a complainant commences legal action against Creating Tomorrow Trust in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.

### 5.2 Complaints about our fulfilment of early years requirements

We will investigate all written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint (see section 10) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that the school is not meeting Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by calling 0300 123 4234 or 0300 123 4666, or by emailing [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk). An online contact form is also available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#org-contacts>.

We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that the school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

## 6. Stages of complaint (not complaints against the headteacher or governors)

As Creating Tomorrow Trust comprises non-maintained special schools, there must be at least 3 stages to our complaints procedure: an informal stage, a formal stage and review by an independent individual. The procedure sets out clear timescales for the management of the complaint.

In all stages of the complaint the headteacher may refer the complaint to the trust board and in this case the complaint will be dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer / Chief Operating Officer, as appropriate.

At each stage in the procedure, Creating Tomorrow Trust 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.

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### 6.1 Withdrawal of a complaint

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

*In all subsequent stages please read that if the complaint is referred by the headteacher to the Trust then the Chief Executive Officer / Chief Operating Officer (as appropriate) replaces the role of headteacher.*

### 6.2 Stage 1: Informal

Creating Tomorrow Trust will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the headteacher, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the school or trust – please see contact details for the trust and each school (Section 14).

We will acknowledge informal complaints within 5 school days, investigate and always try and provide a response within 15 school days.

The informal stage will involve a meeting between the complainant and the headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) and subsequently the subject of the complaint, as appropriate.

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

### 6.3 Stage 2: Formal

Formal complaints can be raised:

- By letter or email
- In person
- By a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

If complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school or trust office (please see section 14).

We will acknowledge formal complaints within 5 school days, investigate and always try and provide a response within 15 school days.

The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify concerns, and seek a resolution. The complainant may be accompanied to this meeting, and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.

In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the complainant has the opportunity to arrange alternative accompaniment.

The headteacher (or other person appointed by the headteacher for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within 15 school days.

If the complainant wishes to proceed to the next stage of the procedure, they should inform the clerk to the trust board within 5 school days. Requests received outside of this time frame will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

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The clerk will acknowledge receipt of the request within 5 school days.

### How to escalate a complaint

Complaints can be escalated by contacting the clerk to the trust board:

- By letter or email
- In person
- Through a third party acting on behalf of the complainant

The clerk will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

### 6.4 Stage 3: Review Panel

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.

We will acknowledge requests for escalation to a review panel within 5 school days. We will always aim to arrange the panel hearing within 10 working days however, to ensure the relevant people are able to attend, the meeting may need be scheduled later than this.

The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Trust and must consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least 1 panel member must be independent of the management and running of the school. The panel cannot be made up solely of governing board members, as they are not independent of the management and running of the school.

The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress (see section 10).

The complainant must have reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; however, the review panel reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the complainant. At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish.

#### At the meeting

At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a suitable companion if they wish. We don't encourage either party to bring legal representation, but will consider it on a case-by-case basis. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by their union.

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.

The panel, the complainant and the school representative will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and school representatives have completed presenting their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered.

The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint, and make a copy of the findings and recommendations available for inspection by the headteacher / head of school.

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### The outcome

The committee can:

- › Uphold the complaint, in whole or in part
- › Dismiss the complaint, in whole or in part

If the complaint is upheld, the committee will:

- › Decide the appropriate action to resolve the complaint
- › Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future

The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 10 school days.

## 7. Complaints against the headteacher, members of the Trust Leadership Team, a governor or the governing board, a trustee or the trust board

### 7.1 Stage 1: Informal

Complaints should be directed to the clerk to the trust board in the first instance.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, member of the Trust Leadership Team or one member of the governing board (including the chair or vice-chair), a suitably-skilled and impartial trustee will carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out in section 6 above).

If the complaint is against a trustee of the trust board, then the Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees will carry out the steps at Stage 1 and subsequent following steps.

If the complaint is against the Chair or Vice Chair of the Trustees, or the trust board as a whole, then one of the trust's members will take advice from the National Governors Association and this may mean carrying out the following steps with support from another trust, or that the complaint is referred directly to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

### 7.2 Stage 2: Formal

If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire governing board or the majority of the governing board, an independent investigator will carry out the steps in stage 2 (set out in section 6 above). They will be appointed by the trust board, and will write a formal response at the end of their investigation.

### 7.3 Stage 3: Review Panel

If the complaint is jointly about the chair and vice-chair, the entire governing board or the majority of the governing board, a committee of independent trustees will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from local trusts or the local authority and will carry out the steps at stage 3 (set out in section 6 above).

## 8. Referring complaints on completion of the school's procedure

If the complainant believes the school or Trust did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the ESFA after they have completed Stage 3.

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The ESFA will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by [Creating Tomorrow Trust](#). They will consider whether [Creating Tomorrow Trust](#) has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint and whether they have followed [Part 7 of the Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

The complainant can refer their complaint to the ESFA online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus), by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit  
Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Cheylesmore House  
5 Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT

## 9. Persistent complaints and Anonymous complaints

### 9.1 Unreasonably persistent complaints

Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However, a complaint may become unreasonable if the person:

- Has made the same complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the school's complaints procedure
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive
- Knowingly provides false information
- Insists on pursuing a complaint that is unfounded, or out of scope of the complaints procedure
- Pursues a valid complaint, but in an unreasonable manner e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refused to cooperate with this complaints procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the time frames it sets out
- Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation goes on
- Makes a complaint designed to cause disruption, annoyance or excessive demands on school time
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes, or a solution that lacks any serious purpose or value

#### Steps we will take

We will take every reasonable step to address the complainant's concerns, and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

If the complainant continues to contact the school or trust in a disruptive way, we may put communications strategies in place. We may:

- Give the complainant a single point of contact via an email address
- Limit the number of times the complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term
- Ask the complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf, such as [Citizens Advice](#)
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary

#### Stopping responding

We may stop responding to the complainant when all of these factors are met:

- We believe we have taken all reasonable steps to help address their concerns

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- We have provided a clear statement of our position and their options
- The complainant contacts us repeatedly, and we believe their intention is to cause disruption or inconvenience

Where we stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will still consider any new complaints they make.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from any of the Trust's sites.

#### 9.2 Duplicate complaints

If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint

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

#### 9.3 Complaint campaigns

Where the trust or school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from complainants unconnected with the trust or school, we may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the trust or school website
- Sending a template response to all of the complainants

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

#### 9.4 Anonymous Complaints

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

### 10. Record keeping

The trust will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally, and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

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 through a Subject Access Request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

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Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and retention schedule.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole trust / governing board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

Where the trust or governing board is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the trust will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

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 trust board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

### 11. Learning lessons

The Committee of the trust board will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the headteacher / Chief executive Officer / Chief Operating Officer where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the trust or school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

### 12. Monitoring arrangements

The Audit & Risk Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring that complaints are handled properly. The Audit & Risk Committee will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in section 11.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the trust's Governance Business Partner.

This policy will be reviewed by Chief Operating Officer no less frequently than every 2 years.

At each review, the procedures will be approved by the full board of trustees.

### 13. Links with other policies

Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures
- Admissions policy
- Exclusions policy
- Staff grievance procedures
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- SEN policy and information report
- Privacy notices

### 14. Contact details for complaints

- Creating Tomorrow Trust
  - Kitteon House, Venture Parkway, Kettering, NN15 6XW
  - Tel: 01536 856542

## Creating Tomorrow Trust

### Complaints Procedures

- Company Secretary: [eedwards@creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk](mailto:eedwards@creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk)
- [www.creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk](http://www.creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk)
  
- Clerk to the Trustees
  - Kitteon House, Venture Parkway, Kettering, NN15 6XW
  - Tel: 01536 856542
  - Company Secretary: [eedwards@creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk](mailto:eedwards@creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk)
  - [www.creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk](http://www.creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk)
  
- Creating Tomorrow College
  - Kitteon House, Venture Parkway, Kettering, NN15 6XW
  - Tel: 01536 856542
  - Email: [info@creatingtomorrowcollege.co.uk](mailto:info@creatingtomorrowcollege.co.uk)
  - [www.creatingtomorrowcollege.co.uk](http://www.creatingtomorrowcollege.co.uk)
  
- Daventry Hill School
  - Ashby Road, Daventry, Northamptonshire, NN11 0QE
  - Tel: 01327 703135
  - Email: [info@daventryhillschool.org.uk](mailto:info@daventryhillschool.org.uk)
  - [www.daventryhillschool.co.uk](http://www.daventryhillschool.co.uk)
  
- Isebrook School
  - Eastleigh Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6PT
  - Tel: 01536 500030
  - Email: [ioffice@isebrook.co.uk](mailto:ioffice@isebrook.co.uk)
  - [www.isebrookschoo.co.uk](http://www.isebrookschoo.co.uk)
  
- Kings Meadow School
  - Manning Road, Moulton Leys, Northampton, NN3 7AR
  - Tel: 01604 673730
  - Email: [office@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk](mailto:office@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk)
  - [www.kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk](http://www.kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk)
  
- Windmill Hill School
  - 1 York Street, Luton, LU2 0HA
  - Tel: 01582 280652
  - Email: [info@windmillhillschool.org.uk](mailto:info@windmillhillschool.org.uk)
  - [www.windmillhillschool.org.uk](http://www.windmillhillschool.org.uk)
  
- Wren Spinney School
  - Westover Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 7LB
  - Tel: 01536 481939
  - Email: [office@wrenspinney.co.uk](mailto:office@wrenspinney.co.uk)
  - [www.wrenspinney.co.uk](http://www.wrenspinney.co.uk)