



Parental Complaints Procedure

This Parental Complaints Procedure meets the standards set out in the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) Schedule 1, Part 7.

Who should use this complaints procedure?

You should only use this complaints procedure if you are a parent or carer of a child at the school (or you were a parent or carer when the incident you wish to complain about took place).

If you are **NOT a parent** then please use the General Complaints Procedure. Copies are available from croftymat.org or from any Crofty Multi Academy Trust school.

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1. What YOU need to do

- Check you are using the right complaints procedure
- Check you have not delayed too long in making a complaint
- Agree to follow the 3-stage procedure

1.1 You **must** be a parent or carer of a child at the school to make a complaint using this Parental Complaints Procedure – OR you were a parent or carer of a child at the school at the time of the incident you wish to complain about.

If you are not a current parent or carer then please use the General Complaints Procedure which can be requested from the Trust Head Office.

1.2 Please check that you are making your complaint **within 3 months of the incident** you wish to complain about. Complaints made after this period may not be considered.

1.3 Please follow the 3-stage procedure explained below (sections 3-5).

- This Parental Complaints Procedure is designed to deal with your complaint fairly, swiftly and as simply as possible.
- If you follow the 3-stage procedure explained below and start by raising your concern informally the school is confident that nearly all complaints can be resolved at this first stage.
- Please do not try to bypass any stage by involving someone else –for example a school governor – as the school will still need to follow all three stages.

1.4 **If your complaint is about Crofty Education Trust** ('the Trust') rather than the school then please go straight to section 6 - *Complaints about the Trust, Chief Executive or Trustee*.

2. What the SCHOOL will do

2.1 *Treat you fairly.*

- All complaints will be dealt with the same way regardless of the nature of the complaint
- The school will deal with your complaint based on the available evidence
- The complaints procedure will respect the confidentiality of everyone involved
- The school will keep a written record of any investigation carried out as part of a formal (Stage 2/3) complaint; together with a record of any subsequent actions it takes

2.2 *Keep you informed.*

- If the school agrees it has made a mistake or decides that in the future, it will do things differently it will tell you this
- If your complaint reaches Stage 2 or 3 it will provide you with a written response

2.3 *Deal with your complaint as quickly as possible.*

- The school will respond to informal Stage 1 complaints as quickly as possible
- Formal complaints which go to Stage 2 or 3 will take longer to resolve as the Headteacher may need to talk to different people to gather evidence and hear both sides of the complaint
- The deadlines the school should meet are listed in sections 3-5 below
- Please be aware that any complaint made just before a half term or other holiday will usually take longer to respond to
- We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period

2.4 *Consider a range of responses to your complaint including:*

- 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

2.5 *Explain what you can do if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint*

3. Informal Complaint - Stage 1

3.1 **Please speak to the class teacher, the Headteacher or another member of staff** and explain your concern.

3.2 The school will aim to resolve your complaint within 10 working days (defined as "School term-time weekdays excluding bank holidays, weekends and school holidays.") If, for whatever reason, they need longer they will let you know in writing.

3.3 If your complaint is about a governor or the Local Governance Committee the school will arrange for the Chair of the Local Governance Committee to contact you.

3.4 If you and the school cannot resolve your complaint informally through discussion then you can proceed to Stage 2.

4. Formal Written Complaint to the Headteacher - Stage 2

4.1 Please **complete the Parental Complaint Form** (Appendix A) and return it to the Headteacher. This form is available below or on request from the school. You can return it either electronically or as a paper copy. The school will acknowledge they have received your form in writing within 5 working days.

4.2 The Headteacher will investigate your complaint within 15 working days. If for whatever reason the investigation requires longer than 15 working days, the school will write to you and explain why and provide the expected date for reaching a decision.

4.3 If your complaint is about the Headteacher or the Chair of the Local Governance Committee then your form will be sent to either the Chief Executive or the Chair of Trustees of Crofty Education Trust. They will follow the same process as if the school was handling your complaint.

4.4 When the Headteacher (or other suitable person) has completed their investigation they will write and tell you the outcome of your complaint. This will usually be one of the following:

- Your complaint cannot be upheld (agreed with) because the available evidence is insufficient or did not substantiate your complaint
- The school does agree your complaint is valid either in part or in full

4.5 In both cases you will receive an outline of your complaint, a brief summary of what actions were taken, and the reasons for the decision.

4.6 In addition you will receive a brief summary of any further action the school will take following your complaint. Please understand this *will not* make any reference to any individuals involved in the complaint.

4.7 If you are unhappy with the outcome of your Written Complaint at Stage 2 you can request a review of the decision. This will be done through a Complaints Review Panel. Please follow the procedure in Stage 3 below.

4.8 If you do not request a review within 15 calendar days of the date of your written response from the school then the school will consider the complaint closed and no further action will be taken.

5. Complaint heard by a Complaints Review Panel - Stage 3

5.1 To request a review of the school's decision you must **complete a Complaint Review Form** (Appendix B) and return it to the school within 15 calendar days of the date of the written response to your original complaint. This form is available below or on request from the school. You can return it either electronically or as a paper copy.

5.2 The school will acknowledge they have received your form in writing within 5 working days and send you further information about how the panel will run and who can attend. They will also inform you that you have a further 7 calendar days to submit any further documents in support of your requested review.

5.3 The school will consult with you to organise a convenient time and date for the Complaints Panel which will usually be held at the school and within 20 working days of receiving your Complaints Review Form. You can ask someone to accompany you to the panel if you wish. If you do choose to submit more documentation the school *may* extend arranging the panel to 30 working days.

5.4 All forms and other documents will be sent to you, the school and the panel members no later than 5 working days before the date of the panel.

5.5 The panel will consist of three people at least one of whom will have no connection with the running of the school. In addition, none of the panel will have had any previous connection with your complaint.

You will be told in advance who the panel are and whether they have any connection with either the school or Crofty Education Trust. An explanation of how the panel will run will be sent to you in advance.

5.6 The outcome of the Complaints Review Panel will usually be one or more of the following:

- Your complaint is dismissed in whole or in part
- Your complaint is upheld in whole or in part
- The panel decide on an appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- The panel recommend to the school or the Trust that changes are made to systems / procedures / policies to ensure problems of a similar nature do not recur

5.7 The Chair of the Complaints Review Panel will write to you within 10 working days with the findings of the panel – which are final. A copy of the findings will also be sent to the Headteacher, the person complained about (*where relevant*), the Chief Executive and the Chair of Trustees.

6. Complaints about the Trust, Chief Executive or Trustees

6.1 All complaints which are not about a single school will be dealt with in a very similar way as outlined above – fairly, swiftly and as simply as possible.

What will be different is who within the Trust will deal with your complaint - as this will depend on who the complaint is being made against. Most complaints will be dealt with by either the Chief Executive or the Chair of Trustees. A detailed list is included in the Trust's Complaints Policy.

6.2 All complaints which are not about a school will automatically be dealt with as a formal written complaint.

Please complete the Parental Complaint Form (Appendix A) – and either hand it in to your school who will forward it OR send direct to the Trust Governance Lead, Mr Jeremy Alder:

jeremy.alder@croftymat.org

The Trust Governance Lead
Crofty Education Trust
1 North Crofty,
Tolvaddon Business Park
Camborne
TR14 0HX

6.3 The Trust will write to the complainant acknowledging the complaint within 5 school days of the date that the written request was received and will confirm the date for providing a response to the complainant.

6.4 Following their investigation the Trust will write to the complainant confirming the outcome within 15 school days of the date that the letter was received. If for whatever reason the investigation requires longer than 15 working days, the Trust will write to you and explain why and provide the expected date for reaching a decision.

6.5 To request a review of the Trust's decision you will need to complete and return the Complaint Review Form below **within 15 calendar days** of the date of the written response to your original complaint.

Full details of how this Stage 3 procedure is carried out will be sent to you with the response you receive to your initial complaint (6.4 *above*) - but will be very similar to that for school-based complaints outlined in section 5 above.

7. What you can do if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint.

If you have completed all three stages of this Parental Complaints Procedure and are not happy with the outcome you can complain to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). You can use the Department for Education's [schools complaints form](#) for this.

Please be aware that the ESFA clearly state **you must follow the school's 3 stage parental complaints procedure first.**

The ESFA have also published [guidance](#) on their procedure for dealing with complaints about academies. The guidance document lists the following address if you wish to complain by post:

Ministerial and Public Communications Division
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Sore Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Parental Complaint Form

Please use this form for Stage 2 written complaints

Please complete this form and return it to the school, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

<i>I confirm I am a parent or carer to a child at this school</i>		<i>Name of school:</i>	
Yes		No	

Your details

Your Name			
Pupil Name <i>(if relevant to complaint)</i>			
Your address			
Telephone numbers			
<i>Daytime:</i>		<i>Evening:</i>	
Email			

Your complaint

<p>Please give concise details of your complaint to allow the matter to be fully investigated. <i>Include dates, times, names of witnesses etc if this is relevant.</i></p>		
<i>You may continue on separate paper or attach additional documents if you wish, or expand the rows if completing electronically.</i>	Number of additional pages attached	

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint?
For example - who have you spoken with and what was the outcome?

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What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

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Date this form was completed

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School use only

Form received by:		Date:	
Acknowledgement sent by:		Date:	
Complaint referred to:		Date:	

