

E-ACT

Forest E-ACT

Academy

Complaints Policy

This policy was reviewed by E-ACT on/by:

Date: August 2013

Department(s): Education, Legal

This policy was ratified by Governors on:

Date: 27th January 2014

Date:

Date:

Frequency of review: Every 1 year

Note: This document uses the most current Government information and guidance at the time of writing. It may change according to Government policy. Contact E-ACT Head Office with any questions.

This page is intentionally left blank.

Final

Introduction

Forest E-ACT Academy seeks to provide a friendly and safe environment where students/pupils reach their full academic and social potential. We recognise, however, that sometimes things go wrong, and parents, carers or members of the public need to raise a concern about the Academy. This policy explains how you can make a complaint and how we will respond to it.

We take your right to make a complaint seriously and your child can expect not to be treated differently because you have made a complaint.

Stages of the complaints process

Informal stage

When a problem arises, we will try to resolve it on an informal basis at first. You can contact the Academy office and ask who would be the best person to speak with about your concern. You can arrange for him/her to phone you back or make an appointment. This may be:

- your child's teacher or Tutor (about pastoral matters);
- an Assistant Principal (about curriculum matters); or
- another member of the senior leadership team.

We can help you more quickly if you tell us:

- What is your main concern?
- How would you like the Academy to help?
- What would you like to happen after you have told the Academy your concern?

We may need time to investigate your concern or to discuss it with other Academy staff. We aim to respond to your concern within three working days and let you know what the outcome is or what we will do next.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the informal stage, you can make a formal complaint within ten working days of the Academy's decision about your complaint.

Formal stage

To make a formal complaint, you will need to put your complaint in writing. You can write to the Principal directly or ask the Academy office for a complaints form.

We will log your complaint and will write you to let you know we have received it within three working days. We may be able to tell you how we have resolved your complaint in our response. If we need more time to investigate or to call a meeting, we will also let you know. We aim to resolve all formal complaints within five working days.

If your complaint is about the Principal, we will tell the Principal and send your complaint to the Chair of Governors.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal stage, you can ask for a review by a panel of Academy governors within ten working days from the date of the Academy's final communication to you about the formal investigation.

Review stage

To begin the review stage, write to the Chair of Governors with details of your complaint and ask for a hearing. The Chair will gather a panel of at least two governors who are not directly associated with the complaint and an independent person who is not involved in the management and running of the academy and invite you to the hearing to discuss your complaint. The hearing will normally take place within ten working days of the Chair receiving your request. You can bring a friend or family member with you for support if you wish.

At the hearing, the panel will, in general:

- Explain the purpose of the hearing and the procedure;
- Invite you to explain your complaint and ask you further questions;
- Invite the Principal to explain how he/she handled your complaint;
- Question any witnesses.

After listening to all parties, the panel will make a decision. The panel will tell you in writing about its decision within five working days of the meeting.

We will keep all letters, e-mails, statements and records of the complaint confidential, unless the Secretary of State for Education, Ofsted or another external party that may be entitled asks to review them.

Serial Complaints

The Academy takes complaints very seriously. However, there are occasions when the system is abused by those wishing to cause a nuisance. Unnecessary repeated complaints waste management time and resources that would be better spent on pupils learning.

If repeated complaints are raised that essentially cover a matter that has already been considered or (with only very minor differences) the complaint will be referred to the relevant stage of the complaints process. If the process has been exhausted the Academy will advise that they are not willing to enter into further correspondence on the matter unless new information comes to light.

Similarly, repeated but different complaints from the same person will be treated on their own merits unless the matters are considered trivial - at which point the Academy will attempt to manage these through informal means only and note subsequent trivial complaints.

After the review stage

The decision of the governor panel is final. However, you can write to the Education Funding Agency or the Secretary of State if you are still not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint.

Education Funding Agency: Academies

academyquestions@efa.education.gov.uk

Ministerial and Public Communications Division

Department for Education

Castle View House

East Lane

Runcorn

WA7 2GJ

There is an online form for complainants who are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint which can be reached at:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolperformance/school-complaints-form>

Special notes for parents/carers of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils

The law requires us to handle complaints made in the EYFS in certain ways and to let you know about them.

- We will keep a record of complaints made in the EYFS for three years.
- We will tell you the outcome of any investigation within 28 days of receiving a complaint;
- You may complain to Ofsted if you wish at Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD, 0300 123 1231.
- We must provide Ofsted, on request, a written record of all complaints made during any specific period, and the actions we took to resolve them.

References and further guidance

[Complaints to Ofsted about schools: guidance for parents](#), Ofsted, July 2008.

This policy was ratified reviewed (tick one) by the Local Governing Body on _____ (date).

Signed, Chair of Governors

Date

Print name