



COMPLAINTS POLICY

SANDON PRIMARY ACADEMY

Mrs R Beckett & Mrs L Kiddle (Co-Principals)

Review date: September 2027

1. Introduction

Sandon Primary Academy is committed to delivering high-quality education and ensuring the wellbeing of all pupils. We value strong relationships with parents, carers, and the wider community. This policy outlines the procedure for addressing concerns and complaints promptly and constructively.

2. Legal Requirement

In accordance with Section 29 of the Education Act 2002, all school governing bodies must have a complaints procedure. Complaints should be directed to the academy initially. If unresolved, the Local Authority may offer guidance but will not intervene unless the outlined steps have been followed.

3. Aims

We aim to handle complaints fairly, openly, and efficiently. Our goal is to resolve issues through dialogue and mutual understanding, prioritising the interests of the child. We ensure all complaints are given adequate opportunity for discussion and resolution.

4. Definitions

- A concern is an expression of worry or doubt seeking reassurance.
- A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction regarding actions taken or lack thereof.

Sandon Primary Academy treats concerns seriously and strives for swift resolution.

5. Who Can Make a Complaint?

Any individual, including members of the public, may raise a complaint about the school's services or facilities, unless covered by separate statutory procedures (e.g. exclusions, admissions).

6. Timescales

Complaints will be addressed as promptly as possible, with a target resolution within 28 days, depending on complexity and urgency. The school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and encourages use of the complaint form (Appendix A).

7. Complaint Logging

All complaints—verbal, written, or via telephone—are recorded in a complaints log. Meeting notes and call summaries are added to ensure transparency. Final outcomes are also documented.

8. Complaint Procedure Levels

- Level 1: Informal discussion with the class teacher
- Level 2: Informal meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Level 3: Formal written complaint to the Principals
- Level 4: Formal complaint to the Academy Trustees

LEVEL 1: A FIRST INFORMAL MEETING

- The complainant should start by telling the class teacher about their concern/concerns. This is usually the best and quickest way of resolving issues.
- It is recommended that the complainant makes an appointment to speak to the class teacher as soon as possible as this will give both parties the opportunity to talk about the issue in an appropriate manner and without being interrupted.
- It is important that the complainant recognises that the academy is a busy organisation and it may not be possible to offer an appointment straight away.
- The purpose of the meeting should be to establish the nature of the concern and to seek a realistic resolution to the problem. It is good practice for the class teacher to make a brief written record of the concern raised and any actions agreed.

LEVEL 2: A SECOND INFORMAL MEETING

- If the complainant feels dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions with the class teacher, they should ask for an appointment to meet with the Principal or a Vice Principal.
- The purpose of this meeting should be to establish the nature of the ongoing concern, what has been discussed with the class teacher so far and any actions arising from the initial meeting. It is in everyone's interest, particularly the child or children, for concerns to be sorted out quickly and smoothly.
- However, it may be that the Principal or Vice Principal will need to look into what has happened since the initial meeting before they can suggest how the complainant's concern might be resolved. If this is the case, it should be agreed how and within what timescale they will contact the complainant to let them know the outcome of their enquiries and what actions they have taken/propose to take.
- The Principal or Vice Principal will make a brief written record of the concern discussed and what has been agreed and to write to the complainant summarising this.
- It is hoped that most problems will have been resolved at this stage through the informal process.

LEVEL 3: FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE PRINCIPALS (appendix A)

- If the complainant feels that the issue/issues raised has/have not been resolved through the informal process and they wish to pursue it further the complainant may raise it through the formal procedure. To do this the complainant must write a formal letter of complaint to the Principal. The complainant's letter should set out clearly the concern which has previously been discussed and why the complainant feels that the issue is unresolved. It is also helpful if the complainant can set out in their letter what resolution they are seeking.
- Moving to the formal complaints procedure is a serious step. In consideration of future home/school relationships everyone concerned will need to concentrate on finding a resolution to the issue and negotiate an agreement as to how this can best be achieved.

- Sandon Primary Academy is led by two Co-Principals, either of whom may manage complaints. Requests for a specific Principal to handle a complaint will only be considered if the complaint directly concerns that individual.
- The Principal will consider the complaint and in doing so should:
 - establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
 - clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
 - meet or contact the complainant if they need further information;
 - clarify what the complainant feel would put things right if this has not been set out in the complainant letter;
 - interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
 - conduct any interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
 - keep notes of any interview for the record
- The Principal will keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:
 - an apology;
 - an explanation;
 - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better (n.b. this is not an admission of negligence);
 - an assurance that the event complained of will not recur.

LEVEL 4: FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE ACADEMY TRUSTEES

- Where the complainant is unhappy about the decision the Principal has made about their complaint, this does not become a complaint about the Principal. If the complainant feels that the complaint has not been resolved the complainant should move to Step 4 of the procedure.
- If the complainant has a concern or complaint that is specifically about the Principal and which has not been resolved at the informal stage, then the complainant must write a formal letter of complaint to the Trustees. The academy will provide the complainant with the Trustee's names and the complainant should write to them at the school address, marking the envelope 'urgent, private and confidential'.
- The Chair of Trustees will acknowledge receipt of the letter within 5 school days
- Time limits: Complaints need to be considered and resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible. As such, complaints made under this procedure must only relate to incidents or concerns occurring within the last 12 months. The complainant's complaint will not usually be able to be considered if their child no longer goes to the school.

Appendix A:

Sandon Primary Academy: Formal Complaint Form

To be completed if issue unresolved after Levels 1 & 2 are followed. To be sealed in an envelope (marked private and confidential) and handed to the school for the attention of the Principals or emailed to principal@sandonprimary.org.uk

Your name:	
Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):	
Relationship with the academy (e.g. parent of a child):	
Your address:	
Contact telephone number:	

Details of your complaint (including dates, names etc. and whether you have spoken to someone about it already - continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

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What action – if any – have you already taken to resolve your complaint AND what actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

School use

Date received:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by: