

## EDSTART SCHOOLS

# Complaints Policy

## PEOPLE, GOVERNANCE &amp; EMPLOYMENT

|                       |                                                                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy owner          | EdStart Specialist Education Ltd                                                |
| Applies to            | EdStart Schools – All Sites                                                     |
| Category              | People, governance & employment                                                 |
| Approval and validity | September 2026 to September 2027                                                |
| Review trigger        | Annual review, or earlier following statutory, regulatory or operational change |

**Status:** This 2026 version supersedes all previous versions.

We welcome suggestions for improving our work. Be assured that, no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem

properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents, staff and the community in addressing any problems that arise.

It is EdStarts policy to welcome comments, compliments and complaints and looks upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt and improve. This policy is intended to ensure that comments, compliments and complaints are acknowledged, dealt with properly and are taken seriously.

The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarised in the following stages:

## Stage 1: Informal Action

- Discuss concerns with the teacher or management
- If the above is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, phone number and date, and the person is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated (within 5 days). The teacher or management may also consult the Head Teacher at this stage.
- The above ensures that the complainant is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, complainants are asked if they wish their concern to be considered further and will have the opportunity to make the complaint in writing to the Manager or Proprietor as appropriate

- The outcome of stage 1 complaint will be recorded in the confidential complaints file kept in the office for inspection by Ofsted

#### Stage 2: Referral to the Head Teacher

- The Head Teachers acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days
- A meeting is arranged within one week with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given
- The Head Teacher investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centers on a pupil, the pupil would normally be interviewed with a parent present or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is not directly involved
- The Head Teacher keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Head Teacher responds with his findings and recommendations. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent within three weeks
- If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the Proprietor
- The outcome of stage 2 complaint will be recorded in the confidential complaints file kept in the office for inspection by Ofsted
- If the complaint is against the Head Teacher, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Proprietor

#### Stage 3: Panel Hearing

- The Proprietor acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by the Governors within 20 working days
- The Proprietor arranges to convene a Complaints Panel from members of the Governing body. The panel members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible. At least one member of the appeals panel will be independent of the management and running of the school
- The Chair of the Committee will write and inform all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 10 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence
- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted

After the meeting, the Committee will consider the evidence and a copy of the findings and recommendations will be sent to the complainant, and the person complained about by electronic mail or given/sent to them within 5 working days.

The findings and recommendations are to be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor and the Manager.

The outcome of a stage 3 complaint will be recorded in the confidential complaints file kept in the office for inspection by Ofsted.

Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 1996 on the grounds that a Governing Body or LEA is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the act.

#### Whistle blowing:

Members of staff may contact HR in confidence to report inappropriate behaviour by any employee. HR will investigate and take any necessary action and if necessary insert into the stage procedures above.

## Appendix 1

Total Number of Complaints to Governors 2023-2023 0 Total Number of Complaints to Governors 2023-2024 0 Total Number of Complaints to Governors 2024-2025 0

