



Complaints Policy

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Complaints Policy

1 Statement of Policy

- 1.1 The Constellation Trust must be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.
- 1.2 Concerns should be handled, if possible, without the need for formal procedures. The requirement to have a complaints procedure need not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. In most cases the class teacher or the individual delivering the service in the case of extended school/academy provision, will receive the first approach. It would be helpful if staff were able to resolve issues on the spot, where necessary, or within 5 working days.
- 1.3 The Constellation Trust will meet and respond to its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty, April 2011.
- 1.4 This policy has been written in compliance with the 'Independent School Standards guidance 2019'.
- 1.5 A written record will be kept of all complaints made and considered on an informal basis along with whether resolved; or a formal procedure; or progression to a panel hearing.
- 1.6 The school/academy will record the action it takes as a result of complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- 1.7 Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.
- 1.9 For senior staff and the central team, the schemes of delegation responsibilities should be followed.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 The term 'Headteacher' also refers to any other title used to identify the Head of School.
- 2.2 The term 'Central team' refers to Trust staff.
- 2.3 The term 'designated person' can be a member of the senior team.
- 2.4 The term 'employee' refers to any member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) employed to work at the school/academy within the Trust.
- 2.5 The term 'Investigating Officer' refers to any member of SLT, as defined by the school/academy Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, a senior support

member of staff, a senior member of the central Trust team, or where deemed necessary, an external person delegated by the Headteacher (CEO where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegations), to investigate the matter.

- 2.6 The Executive Lead for HR should be notified of any formal investigations, which are planned and kept informed at all stages of the process

3 Framework of Principles

3.1 This procedure exists to provide a formal structure to express a concern about school/academy issues. The aim is to ensure that all concerns and complaints are dealt with efficiently, sensitively and at the appropriate level, ensuring that all facts are established, and complaints are handled in a balanced, neutral way, and nothing is assumed.

3.2 An effective Complaints Procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to understand and use
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) so that services can be improved
- provide complainants with written responses where appropriate and if requested

4 The difference between a concern and a complaint

4.1 A concern may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'. A complaint may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

4.2 It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the Complaint's procedure. The Constellation Trust takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

- 4.3 If a complainant has difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, they may be referred to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, it may be referred to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

5 Anonymous concerns or complaints

- 5.1 The Constellation Trust will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head of School or the Executive Principal/CEO, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

6 Time scales

- 6.1 A complainant must raise the complaint **within three months** of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. The Constellation Trust will not consider complaints made outside of this time frame unless exceptional circumstances apply.

7 Concerns or complaints received outside of term time

- 7.1 The Constellation Trust will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

8 Scope of this Complaints Policy

- 8.1 This policy covers all complaints concerning the schools within The Constellation Trust, with the exception of complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures.
- 8.2 If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or tribunals, this may impact on The Constellation Trust's ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.
- 8.3 If a complainant commences legal action against The Constellation Trust in relation to their complaint, The Constellation Trust will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

9 Resolving complaints

- 9.1 At each stage in the procedure, the main aim is to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, The Constellation Trust will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, The Constellation Trust 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/academy policies in light of the complaint
- an apology

9.2 Complainants should be encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem at any stage. An admission that the school/academy could have handled the situation better is not the same as an admission of negligence. It is important to clarify any misunderstanding that might have occurred in order to create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues.

10 Withdrawal of a complaint

10.1 If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, The Constellation Trust will ask for this to be confirmed in writing/by email.

11 Procedures

Informal stage - how to raise a concern

- 11.1 A concern can be communicated in person, in writing, by email or by telephone. It may also be communicated by a third party acting on behalf of a concerned party, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so. Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher, the Head of Year or the Admin Office in the first instance.
- 11.2 When the concern is received in writing, by email or by telephone, the person initially in receipt of the complaint will acknowledge the concern within **24 hours**. The person then dealing with the complaint (this may be different to the person above) respond within **5 school days**.
- 11.3 A concern that involves, or is about, the Head of School may be addressed to the CEO, via the PA to the CEO.
- 11.4 Concerns about the Constellation Trust, a Trustee, or its CEO, which have not yet moved to a formal complaint requiring investigation, should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees, via the Clerk to the Trustees. If these concerns are about the Chair of Trustees, they should be addressed to the Vice-chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees. Please mark them as private and confidential.
- 11.5 In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, The Constellation Trust will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable concerned

parties to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, print sizes or languages, assisting concerned parties in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

- 11.6 If the complainant remains dissatisfied and can articulate what remains unresolved, the matter becomes a formal complaint requiring investigation and will move to Stage 1.

Formal - Stage One

- 11.7 Formal complaints **must be made via the Stage One Complaint Form** (Appendix A).

- 11.8 If a complainant is unable to access the internet, or is otherwise unable to complete the form, then they should contact the school/academy who will make alternative arrangements to receive their complaint.

- 11.9 Upon receipt of the form, the Admin Team will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **3 school days**.

- 11.10 An investigator will then be appointed to the complaint. Ordinarily this will be the Head of School. However, if the complaint is about the Head of School, another senior member of the Trust Team will complete all the actions at Stage One.

- 11.11 The Head of School will then seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Head of School can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

- 11.12 The Head of School may delegate the investigation to another member of the school/academy's Senior Leadership Team but will retain exclusive authority for determining the final outcome of the complaint.

- 11.13 During the investigation, the Investigating Officer will:

- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish, if necessary
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation

- 11.14 At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head of School will provide a formal written response within **10 school days** of the date of receipt of the complaint. If the Head of School is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

- 11.15 The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it.

Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school/academy will take to resolve the complaint.

11.16 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to Stage Two. This must be done within **10 school days** of receipt of the Stage One response **via the Stage Two complaint form**, which will be provided in the Stage One written response. The Constellation Trust will not consider complaints made outside of this time frame unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Formal - Stage Two

11.17 Stage Two involves a review and, if necessary, further investigation by a member of the Senior Trust Team who has not been involved in Stage One. The Stage Two complaint will be acknowledged within **3 school days** and the Senior Trust Member reviewing the case will have **15 school days** in which to respond in writing/by email and resolve the matter formally.

11.18 During the investigation, the Investigator will:

- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish, if necessary
- keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation

11.19 Again, the response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the school/academy will take to resolve the complaint.

11.20 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to Stage Three, a meeting with a panel. This must be done within **10 school days** of receipt of the Stage Two response and the request must be made **via the Stage Three complaint form**, which will be provided in the Stage Two written response. The Constellation Trust will not consider complaints made outside of this time frame unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Formal - Stage Three

11.21 This is the final stage of the complaint's procedure. The Administration team will record the date the communication is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within **5 school days**.

11.22 The purpose of the panel meeting is to:

- Review those aspects of the complaint which remain unresolved
- Review whether the complaint was handled in accordance with our policy

- attempt to achieve reconciliation, and make recommendations to address things that may have gone wrong
- 11.23 The panel **will not** reinvestigate the complaint, review any new complaints, or consider any evidence not already considered at previous stages of the complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage One of the procedure.
- 11.24 A panel will be appointed by or on behalf of The Constellation Trust and will consist of at least three people consisting of a senior leader, a member of the central Trust team and one Trustee who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and one person independent of the management or running of the school/academy (this may be the Head of a different school within the Trust). If the complaint is about a school/academy, the panel will be chaired by the CEO.
- 11.25 The PA to the CEO will write to the complainant to propose a date for the panel meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting and complete Stage Three within **30 school days** of receipt of the Stage Three request. If this is not possible, the PA to the CEO will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.
- 11.26 If the complainant rejects the offer of proposed dates three times, without good reason, the panel will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

Panel process

- 11.27 The panel will invite parties to a meeting in person. The only exceptions to this are a) if the complainant does not want to meet in person, or b) the panel determines that there are highly exceptional circumstances in relation to personal conduct that make a remote meeting more appropriate. In making their decision the panel will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.
- 11.28 A complainant may bring a companion to the panel to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Neither party should bring legal representatives to the panel meeting.
- 11.29 **Note:** *Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this Complaints Policy. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under the Staff Disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.*
- 11.30 Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.
- 11.31 At least **10 school days** before the meeting, the PA to the CEO will:
- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates as

previously agreed by all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible

- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the panel at least **5 school days** before the meeting
- 11.32 Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least **5 school days** before the date of the meeting. The panel **will not** normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.
- 11.33 The meeting will be held in private and may be in a remote/virtual format in circumstances described above. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.
- 11.34 The panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The panel can:
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
 - dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- 11.35 If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the panel will:
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
 - where appropriate, recommend changes to the school/academy's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future
- 11.36 The chair of the panel will provide the complainant and the school/academy with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing/by email, within **10 school days**.
- 11.37 The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education (DfE) if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled.
- 11.38 The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions The Constellation Trust or school/academy will take to resolve the complaint.
- 11.39 The panel will ensure that those findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. Furthermore, they will be available for inspection on the school/academy premises by the Head of School

- 11.40 A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, along with what actions have been taken, regardless of the decision.
- 11.41 All correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

12 Complaints about the CEO/Trustees

- 12.1 If the complaint is about the CEO or a Trustee, the complaint will be referred to the Chair of Trustees for investigation.
- 12.2 If the complaint is about the Chair of trustees, the complaint will be referred to the vice-chair for investigation. The vice-chair may delegate aspects of the investigation to another Trustee but will retain exclusive authority for determining the final outcome of the complaint.
- 12.3 If the complaint is about The Constellation Trust or a member of central staff, the complaint will be referred to the CEO or to the relevant line manager.
- 12.4 Investigations under 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3 will be carried out under Stage Two of this policy (Section 13), using the corresponding deadlines for acknowledgement, investigation, and escalation.
- 12.5 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to Stage (section 14), a meeting with a panel.
- 12.6 If the complaint is about the Chair and/or Vice Chair of Trustees, or the entirety or majority of the Board of Trustees, then all three members of the panel will be independent of the management and governance of Constellation Trust Schools.

13 Next Steps

- 13.1 If the complainant believes the school/academy 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 DfE after they have completed Stage Three.
- 13.2 The DfE will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made. They will consider whether The constellation 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.
- 13.3 The complainant can refer their complaint to the DfE online at www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe.

- 13.4 DfE guidance recommends that complainants contact the school/academy to discuss a concern first, as most problems can be solved this way. Complainants may only complain to the DfE directly where it relates to a child at risk, a child missing school or where the school/academy has failed to follow its complaints procedure.
- 13.5 If a complainant lodges a concern directly with the DfE about a child at risk or missing school, and the DfE confirms with The Constellation Trust that the substance of the concern has been addressed to their satisfaction, The Constellation Trust reserves the right to consider the matter closed.

14 Serial and persistent Complainants

- 14.1 Schools should do their best to be helpful to people who contact them with a complaint or concern or a request for information. However, in cases where a school/academy is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks them to reconsider their position, the school/academy will refer to the HR department for a final resolution.
- 14.2 There will be occasions when, despite all stages of the complaint procedure having been followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied. It is important for schools to recognise when they really have done everything they can in response to a complaint. It is a poor use of schools' time and resources to reply to repeated letters, emails or telephone calls making substantially the same points. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Head of School or the Chair of Trustees can inform them that the procedure has been completed and that the matter is now closed.
- 14.3 If the complainant contacts the school/academy again on the same issue, then the correspondence may be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and the school/academy may choose not to respond. However, schools must be careful that they do not mark a complaint as 'serial' before the complainant has completed the procedure.
- 14.4 Under no circumstances should an individual be marked as a serial complainant for exercising their democratic right to refer their complaint to their local MP regardless of which stage the complaint has reached. The application of a 'serial or persistent' marking should be against the subject or complaint itself rather than the complainant.

15 Unreasonable Complainants

- 15.1 We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. The Constellation Trust will not usually limit the contact complainants have with our school/academy's. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening. Once a complainant's behaviour has become so extreme as to be deemed unreasonable and abusive, they will not necessarily be entitled to all stages of the complaint procedure outlined above.

15.2 The Constellation Trust define unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders the consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school/academy, such as, if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaint's investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint's procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint's procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school/academy's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the DfE
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school/academy time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with

15.3 Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school/academy about the complaint while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

15.4 It should be noted that unacceptable behaviour from complainants will not be tolerated:

- acting outside of the law

- if jeopardises the health and wellbeing of staff or students
- abusive language and behaviour towards staff or students
- uses threats to intimidate
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums

In the event of any of the above, appropriate steps will be taken, including:

- asking the complainant to leave the school/academy premises
- in repeated circumstances if the complainant's behaviour is inappropriate towards a member of staff, they may be banned from the site for a fixed period of time. During this period they will be asked to name an appropriate adult who can represent their child
- Referring to the relevant authorities (LA, Safeguarding, Police etc.)

15.5 Whenever possible, the Head of School will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an '*unreasonable*' marking.

15.6 If the behaviour continues, the Head of School will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, The Constellation Trust will immediately inform the Police and communicate our actions in writing/by email. This may include barring an individual from the school/academy.

15.7 Ultimately, if a complainant persists to the point that the school/academy considers it to constitute harassment, legal advice will be sought as to the next steps. In some cases, injunctions and other court orders have been issued to complainants because of their behaviours.

15.8 Once the school/academy has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, they will let the complainant know; ideally, through a hard copy letter but an email will suffice.

16 Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

16.1 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 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

Investigator

16.2 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
- sensitively and thoroughly conversing with 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
- considering records and other relevant information
- analysing information
- liaising with the complainant to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right

16.3 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 of School or complaints panel that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems
- The Head of School or complaints panel will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

The PA to the CEO or the Clerk to the Trustees

16.4 The Clerk to the Trustees is the main point of contact for the complainant at Stage Three 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/academy 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 the written material relevant to the complaint from stages one and two, and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- take minutes of the meeting

Panel Chair

16.5 The Chair of the panel, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked 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 panel 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, which may require a short adjournment of the meeting

- both the complainant and the school/academy 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 panel is open-minded and acts independently
- no member of the panel has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- the meeting is minuted
- they liaise with the regional officer

Panel members

16.6 Panel members should be aware that:

- The meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so; no person may sit on the panel 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/academy and the complainant; The Constellation Trust 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 panel 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 panel 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 panel 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 panel considers is not in the child/young person's best interests
- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount

Appendix A

Notification of Complaint – Formal Stage 1

Wherever possible, the Constellation Trust seeks to resolve any complaint through the informal stage of the complaints process. However, should you believe that your concerns have not been resolved then you can progress to the formal stage of the process.

Please use this form to submit a Complaint in accordance with Stage One of the formal Complaint Procedure adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Constellation Trust.

The completed Notification of Complaint Form should be sent to the Head of School. If your complaint is about the Head of School, please send the completed form to the CEO of the Constellation Trust; if it is about the CEO, then send the completed form to the Chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees. You are advised to keep a copy for your reference.

Please be aware that the information, in normal circumstances, will be shared with any person(s) complained about.

Name:

Address:

Email Address.....

Telephone Number.....

If relevant

Name of child at the school

The Year group the child is in.....

Describe briefly:

Please clearly state the full nature of your complaint in as much detail as necessary to assist the Investigating Officer to reach a resolution. State fully what the issues are. If referring to specific incidents, please include details of dates, times, places and the people involved. If referring to documents, please attach copies if possible or supply details which will enable copies of the document to be located.

Please note only incidents which have occurred within the last 3 months will be considered under the terms of the Complaints Policy. Complaints made out of this time frame will not be considered unless exceptional circumstances apply

(Continue on a separate page if necessary)

Have you attempted to resolve the matter informally? YES/NO

If YES, who have you spoken to/written to. What was the outcome and why are you not satisfied with the informal response?

If NO, why not?

What remains unresolved and what outcome would you like to see?

--

For office use only	
Date form received:	
Date Trust office notified:	
Date of meeting with the complainant:	
Date decision conveyed to complainant: (attach a copy of the letter)	
Name and job title:	
Signed:	Date:

Appendix B

Notification of Complaint – Formal Stage Two

Please use this form to submit a Complaint in accordance with Stage Two of the formal Complaint Procedure adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Constellation Trust.

The completed Notification of Complaint Form should be sent to the Executive Lead HR of the Constellation Trust; if it is about the CEO, then send the completed form to the Chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees. You are advised to keep a copy for your reference.

Please be aware that the information in normal circumstances will be shared with any person(s) complained about.

Name:

Address:

Email Address.....

Telephone Number.....

If relevant

Name of child at the school

The Year group the child is in.....

Describe briefly:

Please clearly state the full nature of your complaint in as much detail as necessary to assist the Investigating Officer to reach a resolution. State fully what the issues are. If referring to specific incidents, please include details of dates, times, places and the people involved. If referring to documents, please attach copies if possible or supply details which will enable copies of the document to be located.

Please note only incidents which have occurred within the last 3 months will be considered under the terms of the Complaints Policy. Complaints made out of this time frame will not be considered unless exceptional circumstances apply

(Continue on a separate page if necessary)

Have you attempted to resolve the matter via Stage One of the complaints process?
YES/NO

If YES, who have you spoken to/written to. What was the outcome and why are you not satisfied with the informal response?

If NO, why not?

What remains unresolved and what outcome would you like to see?

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For office use only	
Date form received:	
Date Trust office notified:	
Date of meeting with the complainant:	
Date decision conveyed to complainant: (attach a copy of the letter)	
Name and job title:	
Signed:	Date:

Appendix C

Notification of Complaint – Formal Stage Three

Please use this form to submit a Complaint in accordance with Stage Three of the formal Complaint Procedure adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Constellation Trust. This will result in an independent panel hearing your complaint.

The completed Notification of Complaint Form should be sent to the CEO of the Constellation Trust. If your complaint is about the CEO, then send the completed form to the Chair of Trustees via the Clerk to the Trustees. You are advised to keep a copy for your reference.

Please be aware that the information in normal circumstances will be shared with any person(s) complained about.

Name:

Address:

Email Address.....

Telephone Number.....

If relevant

Name of child at the school

The Year group the child is in.....

Describe briefly:

Please clearly state the full nature of your complaint in as much detail as necessary to assist the Investigating Officer to reach a resolution. State fully what the issues are. If referring to specific incidents, please include details of dates, times, places and the people involved. If referring to documents, please attach copies if possible or supply details which will enable copies of the document to be located.

Please note only incidents which have occurred within the last 3 months will be considered under the terms of the Complaints Policy. Complaints made out of this time frame will not be considered unless exceptional circumstances apply

(Continue on a separate page if necessary)

Have you attempted to resolve the matter via Stage Two of the Complaints process?
YES/NO

If YES, who have you spoken to/written to. What was the outcome and why are you not satisfied with the informal response?

If NO, why not?

What remains unresolved and what outcome would you like to see?

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For office use only	
Date form received:	
Date Trust office notified:	
Date of meeting with the complainant:	
Date decision conveyed to complainant: (attach a copy of the letter)	
Name and job title:	
Signed:	Date: