Complaints Procedure for schools within the Children First Learning Partnership (Version 5)

The Complaints Policy in respect of the Children First Learning Partnership has been discussed and adopted by the Directors Board on 11.12.2024	
Chair of Board:	*Mrs N. Chell*
Responsible Officer:	*CEO – Mrs A Rourke*
Agreed and ratified by the Directors	*21.05.2026*
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General principles: The right approach

As part of the general home/school policy, parents and pupils are encouraged to express their views on what goes on within school, so that staff receive an early warning of potential difficulties, and many problems can be prevented from arising. Certain general underlying principles should be observed whenever concerns or complaints are raised.

1 Publicity

Parents, carers and other members of the school community should always know how they can raise concerns or lodge a formal complaint. The complaints procedure should be easily accessible and well publicised.

A summary of how a school deal with complaints should be included in the information which is given to new parents when their children join the school, and in the information given to the children themselves. Parents and children should be reminded of the system at regular intervals.

Schools should prepare some publicity for parents explaining how problems are dealt with and how the complaints procedure works.

Schools should consider whether they need to make the procedures available in languages other than English. Braille or large print version should be made available if requested. The school needs to consider in advance how it would locate qualified interpreters in various languages, including British Sign Language.

If parents contact the central MAT team with their concerns they should be referred back to the school. However, the MAT through its web site can help parents and others know about, and access, procedures available.

2 Procedures should be as speedy as possible - consistent with fairness to all concerned

Each stage of the procedure should have known time limits. Where it is not possible to meet these, information about progress must be given to the complainant. Care should be taken not to draw things out with unnecessary bureaucracy. Schools should have a hierarchy for dealing with complaints.

The complaints procedure is distinct from formal disciplinary proceedings for staff and this needs to be made clear to all concerned. There may be occasions where a complaint launches a disciplinary procedure which puts the complaints procedure on hold. If so, the complainant should be informed of this and any non-disciplinary aspects of the complaint should be dealt with by the usual complaints procedures; the complainant should be up-dated on progress on a regular basis. It may be clear after the disciplinary procedures have been completed that particular responses to the complainant are required (eg an apology or an explanation of new policies to avoid a similar problem again).

3 Support for complainants

As part of the general publicity about complaints procedures, it is important for complainants to know where they can go for information, advice and advocacy, if they require it. Ideally, support should be offered from individuals and organisations who are clearly separate from those complained against.

Parents and carers raising concerns or complaints should be invited to be accompanied by a friend, a relative or a representative at any stage of the procedure.

4 Support for a person complained against

Staff who may be questioned as part of a complaints procedure investigation must feel that they are being treated in a fair way and be informed that they too will have an opportunity to put their case. They should be told about the procedure, given a copy of it, and be kept informed of progress. There is a crucial balance to be maintained between supporting the individual so that his/her rights and reputation are protected, and investigating a complaint thoroughly and impartially. The staff member has the right to be accompanied by a union representative, friend or colleague at discussions about the complaint.

5 Confidentiality

It is very important to treat conversations and correspondence with discretion. It is vital that complainants feel confident that their complaint will not mean that their child will be penalised. However, from the outset, all parties to a complaint should be made aware that some information may have to be shared with others involved in the operation of the complaint's procedure.

It is usually proper to disregard anonymous complaints unless somebody is prepared to substantiate them, but the danger in this is that they may relate to something quite serious. If the forewarned eventuality occurs, to the detriment of the school, the complainant may come forward subsequently and say that s/he alerted the school even though the complaint was unsigned. It should be at the Executive Head/ headteacher or local advisory board's discretion to decide whether the gravity of an anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

6 Redress

If the outcome of the complaint's procedure shows that the school is at fault, it is often sufficient to provide redress in the form of an acknowledgement that the complaint is valid. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of: an apology; an explanation; a reassurance that the event complained of will not recur; an undertaking to review school policies or practices in the light of the complaint; or, in appropriate circumstances, financial compensation. Fear of litigation should not prevent a school from admitting to parents when mistakes have been made, but advice should be taken from the MAT CEO if litigation could be possible. Staff should also take advice from their union and/or professional body.

7 Staff awareness and training

School staff, including non-teaching staff, should be familiar with the procedures so that they can advise parents about their operation. Potentially a great many staff are involved in handling complaints, especially at an informal level. Their confidence in doing so depends on their having clear information about the procedures, reassurances that senior staff are committed to the procedures and some basic training in the practical interpersonal skills needed in dealing with people who are upset or angry. All school staff should have clear information about which staff have particular responsibilities at school so that parents do not get continually passed from one to another.

8 Record keeping

If complaints are to contribute to raising the quality of education, then they need to be recorded and monitored termly by senior staff and local advisory board members. Recording should begin at the point when a concern or initial complaint has become the kind of complaint that cannot be resolved on the spot but needs investigation and/or consultation with others in the school, and will require a report back (either orally or in writing) to the parent.

Recording at the earliest stages need only be a very basic record of the complaint, giving the date, name of parent and general nature of the complaint. A pro-forma or comments and complaints file should be used which is both confidential and kept securely.

Complaints reaching Stage 2 and above should be reported by the Executive Head/ Headteacher to the CEO, to ensure that the Directors retain oversight of implementation of this procedure and of issues arising in schools within the Multi Academy Trust. This reporting should remain statistical in nature and not breach the confidentiality of the process.

Stage 1: The first contact - guidelines for dealing with concerns and complaints informally

1.1 The vast majority of concerns and complaints can be resolved informally. There are many occasions where concerns are resolved straight away through the class teacher or school administrative staff or Head of School/ Headteacher, depending on whom the parent first approached.

1.2 Complainants must feel able to raise concerns with members of staff either in person, by telephone, email or in writing. On occasion it may be appropriate for someone to act on behalf of a parent or guardian making a complaint. Schools should have a policy for staff about dealing with parents.

1.3 At first it may be unclear whether a complainant is asking a question or expressing an opinion rather than making a complaint. A complainant may want a preliminary discussion about an issue to help decide whether he or she wishes to take it further.

Procedure for schools to use at Stage 1

1.4 Complainants have an opportunity to discuss their concern with the appropriate member of staff who clarifies with the complainant the nature of the concern, and reassures them that

the school wants to hear about it. The “appropriate member of staff” is the person who has been designated to handle the complaint and not the teacher being complained about. The member of staff may explain to the complainant how the situation happened. It can be helpful to identify at this point what sort of outcome the complainant is looking for.

1.5 If the member of staff first contacted cannot immediately deal with the matter, s/he makes a clear note of the date, name and contact details of the complainant.

1.6 All members of staff will know how to refer, if necessary, to the person with responsibility for the particular issue raised by the complainant. S/he will check later to make sure the referral has been successful.

1.7 In some schools or for certain issues, the headteacher may decide to deal with concerns directly at this stage.

1.8 If the concern relates to the headteacher, the complainant is advised to contact the chair of the local advisory board.

1.9 The staff member dealing with the concern makes sure that the complainant is clear what action (if any) or monitoring of the situation has been agreed, putting this in writing only if this seems the best way of making things clear.

1.10 Where no satisfactory solution has been found within ten working days, complainants will be asked if they wish their concern to be considered further. If they do, they should be given clear information, both orally and in writing, about how to proceed and about any independent advice available to them (see Appendix B).

1.11 In some cases, and in small schools, it may be necessary for a complaint to progress straight to stage 2.

Stage 2: Referral to the Head of School or Headteacher for investigation

2.1 At this stage it has become clear that the concern is a definite complaint. In some cases, the head of school/headteacher has already been involved in looking at the matter; in others it is his/her first involvement. In either case, it is helpful for the head of school/headteacher (or the person delegated to investigate) to use guidelines to ensure consistency among cases, and to make sure that nothing happens at this stage which could make it difficult for later stages to proceed smoothly.

2.2 As head of school/Headteachers have responsibility for the day-to-day running of their schools, they have responsibility for the implementation of a complaints system, including the decisions about their own involvement at various stages. One of the reasons for having various "stages" in a complaint’s procedure is to reassure complainants that their grievance is being heard by more than one person. Head of School/ Headteachers should make arrangements to ensure that their involvement will not predominate at every stage of a particular complaint. For example arrangements may be made for other staff to deal with complainants' concerns at Stage 1, while the Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) deals with contact with complainants at Stage 2 . Even at that stage the

headteacher may designate another member of staff to collect some of the information from the various parties involved, though the decision on action to be taken may not be delegated. In some cases a complaint will have been taken straight to Stage 2 and will have been investigated by the Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) as the most appropriate person.

Procedure for schools to use at Stage 2

2.3 The Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) acknowledges the complaint orally or in writing within three working days of receiving the written complaint. The acknowledgement gives a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint. This should normally be within ten working days; if this proves impossible, the complainant should be contacted with a reason for the delay and a revised target date.

2.4 The Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) *(or designate) provides an opportunity for the complainant to meet him/her to supplement any information provided previously. It is made clear to the complainant that if s/he wishes, s/he may be accompanied to any meeting by a friend, relative, representative, or advocate who can speak on his or her behalf, and that interpreting facilities are available if needed.

2.5 If necessary, the Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) *(or designate) should interview witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil may also need to be interviewed. Pupils would normally be interviewed with their parent/carer present. In some situations, circumstances may prevent this, e.g. where this would seriously delay the investigation of a serious/urgent complaint or where particular circumstances mean that a pupil has specifically said s/he would prefer that parents or carers were not involved. In such circumstances another member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable should be asked to attend. If a member of staff is complained against, the needs of that person should be borne in mind (see paragraph 4 under ‘General Principles’).

2.6 The Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) *(or designate) keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations, and other documentation.

2.7 Once all the relevant facts have been established, the headteacher (or designate) should then produce a written response to the complainant, or may wish to meet the complainant to discuss/resolve the matter directly.

2.8 A written response includes a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, this includes what action the school will take to resolve the complaint. The complainant is advised that should s/he wish to take the complaint further s/he should notify the Chair of the Local Advisory Board within 20 working days of receiving the outcome letter.

2.9 If a complaint is against the action of an Executive Head/Headteacher or Head of School, or if any named here have been very closely involved at Stage 1, the complaint may be moved to directly to Stage 3.

* Senior member of staff as circumstances see fit due to absence, availability, nature of complaint.

Stage 3: Review by the Local Advisory Board

3.1 ***Complaints only rarely reach this formal level, but it is important that governing boards are prepared to deal with them when necessary.*** At this stage, schools should seek advice from the MAT CEO and Governance Advisor. This can provide a useful "outside view" on the issues and ensure that the correct procedure is followed.

3.2 ***It is important that this review not only be independent and impartial but that it is seen to be so.*** Therefore, individual complaints should not be considered by the full local governing board as serious conflicts of interest can arise. For example, in exceptional circumstances a complaint may result in disciplinary action against a member of staff, and local advisory board members might be required to give an unprejudiced hearing to an appeal by the member of staff concerned. Similarly, some governors might have previous knowledge of the problem which led to the complaint and would be unable to give fair unbiased consideration to the issue. The DfE requires schools within a Multi Academy Trust to ensure that at least one member of an appeal panel is independent of the management and running of the school. At least one panel member will therefore be identified from another school within the Children First Learning Partnership.

3.3 Many complaints are inevitably seen by parents as being "against" a particular member of staff and their actions. However, all complaints which reach this stage will have done so because the complainant has not been satisfied by Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) response at the earlier stage of the procedure, and it may be appropriate for the local advisory board to consider that the complaint is against the school rather than against the member of staff whose actions led to the original complaint.

Procedure for review by the local advisory board at Stage 3

3.4 Upon receipt of a written request by the complainant for the complaint to proceed to Stage 3, the procedures outlined below should be followed.

3.5 The clerk to the local advisory board should write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the written request. The acknowledgement should inform the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by three local advisory board members, at least one of which will be from another school within the Children First Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust, and that this hearing will take place within 20 working days of receiving the complaint. The letter should also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be received in time for the documents to be sent to the panel.

3.6 The clerk to the local advisory board should arrange to convene a Local Advisory Board Complaints Panel, ensuring that at least one governor is from a Children First Learning Partnership school unconnected with the complaint. It may be necessary for reserves to be identified to ensure that three local advisory board members are available to carry out their task within the set time.

3.7 All panel members should be local advisory board members who have had no prior involvement with the complaint, including at least one local advisory board member who is independent of the management and running of the school. If s/he has not previously been

involved, the chair of the local advisory board should chair the panel; otherwise, the vice-chair should take this role. Generally, it is not appropriate for the head of school/headteacher to have a place on the panel. Local Advisory Board members will want to bear in mind the advantages of having a parent (who is also a governor) on the panel. They will also want to be sensitive to issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.

3.8 The chair/vice-chair will ensure that the complaint is heard by the panel within 20 working days of receiving the letter in 3.5. All relevant correspondence regarding the complaint should be given to each panel member as soon as the composition of the panel is confirmed. If the correspondence is extensive, the chair of the panel should prepare a thorough summary for sending to panel members.

3.9 The chair/vice-chair will write to all parties (the complainant, head of school/ headteacher, members of the panel and any relevant witnesses) at least five working days before the meeting, informing them of the date, time and place. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of their right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/advocate/interpreter. The letter will also explain how the meeting will be conducted and the complainant's right to submit further written evidence to the panel.

3.10 The chair/vice-chair of the local advisory board should invite the headteacher or head of school (supported by the Executive head) to attend the panel meeting and prepare a written report for the panel in response to the complaint. The Headteacher/Head of School (supported by the Executive Head) may also invite members of staff directly involved in matters raised by the complainant to respond in writing or in person to the complaint. Any relevant documents including the Head of School/ headteacher's report should be received by all concerned - including the complainant - at least five working days prior to the meeting.

3.11 The involvement of staff other than the head of school (supported by the Executive Head) /Headteacher is subject to the discretion of the chair of the panel.

3.12 It is the responsibility of the chair of the panel to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.

3.13 The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that sometimes it may only be possible to establish facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has at least been taken seriously.

3.14 The panel should remember that the complainant might not be used to dealing with groups of people in formal situations and may feel inhibited when speaking to the panel. It is therefore recommended that the chair of the panel ensures that the proceedings are as informal as possible.

3.15 If either party wishes to introduce previously undisclosed evidence or witnesses, it is in the interests of natural justice to adjourn the meeting so that the other side has time to consider and respond to the new evidence.

3.16 The meeting should allow for:

- the complainant to explain their complaint
- the headteacher to explain the school's response
- the headteacher to question the complainant about the complaint

- the complainant to question the head of school (supported by the Executive head) /Headteacher and/or other members of staff about the school's response
- panel members to have an opportunity to question both the complainant and the headteacher
- any party to have the right to call witnesses (subject to the approval of the chair)
- all parties having the right to question all the witnesses
- final statements by both the complainant and the Head of School/Headteacher.

3.17 The chair of the panel will explain to the complainant and the headteacher that the panel will now consider its decision, and a written decision will be sent to both parties within 15 working days. The complainant, head of school (supported by the Executive Head) /Headteacher, other members of staff and witnesses will then leave.

3.18 The panel will then consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and (a) reach a unanimous, or at least a majority, decision on the complaint and (b) decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint and (c) where appropriate, suggest recommended changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

3.19 A written statement outlining the decision of the panel must be sent to the complainant and Head of School/Headteacher. The letter to the complainant should explain that if they are not satisfied with the response whether a further appeal can be made, and if so, to whom.

3.20 The school should ensure that a copy of all correspondence and notes are kept on file in the school's records. These records should be kept separately from any involved pupil's personal records.

3.21 Once Stage 3 has concluded this should be reported by the Executive Head/ headteacher to the CEO, to ensure that Directors retain oversight of implementation of this procedure and of issues arising in schools within the Multi Academy Trust. This reporting should remain statistical in nature and not breach the confidentiality of the process.

Stage 4: Beyond local resolution

4.1 **The Education and Skills Funding Agency:** Complaints can be taken to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for review on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The ESFA considers complaints about academies that fall into the following areas:

- undue delay or non-compliance with an academy's own complaints procedure
- an academy's failure to comply with a duty imposed on it under its funding agreement with the Secretary of State
- an academy's failure to comply with any other legal obligation, unless there is another organisation better placed to consider the matter as set out in the next section

Further information can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy

Dealing with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complaints

- We define unreasonably persistent and vexatious complaints as those which, because of the frequency or nature of the complainants' contacts, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints. The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complaint.
- Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complaint include those detailed within Appendix D. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the complaint will be so defined.
- The school will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated in accordance with this Complaints Policy. If there are concerns that a complaint may fall within the category of being unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the Headteacher /Executive Head will seek guidance and advice from the CEO.
- If a complainant is found to be unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the CEO will write to the complainant advising them of the decision and the reasons for this. The letter should state that all future correspondence from them with regards to complaints should directed to them who will consider whether it raises any substantive new issue(s).
- The complainant will be advised that if no substantive new issue is raised, any future complaints will not receive a response. They will also be advised of their right to complain about the decision to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- There is no internal route of appeal against the decision that a complaint is persistent and/or vexatious.
- If future complaints do raise substantive new issues, it will be investigated in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Accountability

- The Headteacher /Executive Head holds delegated responsibility for discharging the sound application of all establishment policies.
- The Headteacher /Executive Head should inform the CEO and their local advisory board of all matters relating to serious breaches of this policy including any major incident to be addressed under this policy promptly, preferably prior to action being taken insofar as is reasonably practicable.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

- The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout all Children First Learning Partnership establishments.
- The Children First Learning Partnership will monitor the operation and effectiveness of arrangements referred to in this policy at each CFLP establishment.
- The Trust will review this policy annually in consultation with each Trust establishment.

Appendix A Concerns and Complaints about Schools

Guidance notes for Parents

(Draft text of a leaflet / webpage, to be modified to fit the particular context of the school)

If you have a concern or complaint

We would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Be assured that no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

What to do first

For primary/first schools: Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher.]

Any member of staff at the school can help you and direct you to the most appropriate person to deal with your complaint. If you have a complaint which you feel should be looked at by the headteacher in the first instance you can contact him/her straightaway if you prefer. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. You may need an appointment to do this, and can make one by ringing, calling or emailing the school. You can take a friend or relation to the appointment with you if you would like to do so.

All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem informally. They will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what you would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If you are dissatisfied with the teacher's response (or with the head of school/ headteacher's initial reaction if he/she has already been involved) you can make a complaint to the head of school/ headteacher. This should be made in writing.

If your complaint is about an action of the headteacher personally, then you should refer your complaint to the local advisory board. You can contact them through the Clerk to the Local Advisory Board.

You may also find it helpful at this stage to have a copy of the School's Complaints Procedures as this explains in detail what procedures are followed. This is available from the school.

The Headteacher will ask to meet you for a discussion of the problem. Again, you may take a friend or someone else with you if you wish. The Headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

Most problems can be resolved by the end of this stage.

If your complaint has not been resolved

If you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the chair of the local advisory board to ask for referral of your complaint to the Local Advisory Board. It will then be heard by a group of local advisory board members who have no previous knowledge of the problem, including a local advisory board member from another school within the Children First Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust, and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. You will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting which the headteacher will also attend. The Children First Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust Procedure statement explains how these meetings operate.

Further action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Secretary of State for Education. Again, there is more information on this in the Children First Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust Complaints Procedure.

Appendix B How to Listen to Complaints – Guidance for Schools

As soon as you realise that you are listening to a complaint, remember these points:

Don't pass the buck	Try not to keep transferring someone from one place to another. Make sure you know the contact person for anything you cannot deal with yourself.
Don't be flippant	First impressions count. You and the school may be judged on your immediate reaction.
Treat all complaints seriously	However small or trivial it may seem to you; the complaint will be an important problem for anyone who takes the trouble to complain.
Treat every complaint individually	Even if you have already received several similar complaints the same day, it is probably the person's first chance to have their say.
Be courteous and patient	Be sympathetic and helpful, but do not blame other colleagues.
Say who you are	If you are unknown to the person, introduce yourself.
Ask for their name and use it	Anonymous complaints are acceptable where there are special circumstances.
Take time to find out exactly what the problem is	It is easy for someone to forget to tell you an important detail, particularly if they are upset or annoyed.
Don't take the complaint personally	To an angry or upset person, YOU are the school, and the only one they can put their feelings to right now.
Stay cool and calm	Do not argue with the person - be polite and try to find out exactly what the person thinks is going wrong, or has gone wrong.
Check you are being understood	Make sure that the person understands what you are saying. Don't use jargon - it can cause confusion and annoyance to someone "not in the know".
Don't rush Take your time.	Let people have their say, and let off steam if they need to. Listen carefully and sympathetically to their problems before replying and attempting to find a solution or offer a next step.

Appendix C

Complaint form

Please complete and return to the Head of School/ Headteacher or Clerk to Local Advisory Board via the email office.oxh@cflptrust.uk (change to your school address) (if the Headteacher has already reviewed the issue) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name:
Your relationship to the pupil:
Address: **Postcode:** **Day time telephone number:** **Evening telephone number:** **Email address:**
Please give details of your complaint, including dates and other relevant factual information.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature: **Date:**
<u>For school use:</u> **Date acknowledgement sent:** **By who:** **Complaint referred to:** **Date:**

Appendix D:
Examples of unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complaints

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the complaint will be so defined.

- There are insufficient or no grounds for the complaint and it is made only to annoy (or for reasons that the complainant does not admit or make obvious).
- There are no specified grounds for the complaint despite offers of assistance.
- The complainant refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
- The complaint is about issues not within the power of the school to investigate, change or influence and where the complainant refuses to accept this.
- The complainant insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the Complaints Policy (insisting, for example, that there must not be any written record of the complaint or insisting the complaint is only dealt with by the Children First Learning Partnership Chief Executive).
- There appears to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaint investigation, and an attempt to have them replaced.
- There is an unreasonable number of contacts with us, by any means, in relation to a specific complaint or complaints.
- There are persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to numerous, frequent and/or complex communication.
- Attempts to harass, verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive or discriminatory language.
- Subsidiary or new issues are raised whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process.
- Trivial or irrelevant new information is introduced whilst the complaint is being investigated and an expectation that this to be taken into account and commented on.
- There is a change to the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed.
- The complainant denies statements he or she made at an earlier stage in the complaint process.
- The complainant electronically records meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person involved.
- The complainant refuses to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given.
- The same complaint is made repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints process has been concluded and where the complainant insists that the minor differences make these 'new' complaints which should be put through the full complaints process.
- Documented evidence is not accepted as factual by the complainant.
- The complaint relates to an issue based on a historic and irreversible decision or incident.

Version Control:

When	Amendment	By who
Whole document	All references to associate head updated to head of school	**CEO**
November 2022 Front cover	Ratification date /review dates changed	**CEO**
Nov 2024	Re badged. Ratification date /review dates changed Hyperlinks updated	**CEO**
May 2026	Ratification date /review dates changed Email address changed	**OM**