

EASTWOOD GRANGE SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Eastwood Grange Vision Statement:

“Building resilience and skills in our young people for an independent, fulfilled life beyond education”

Overview

Eastwood Grange School is a special day school for up to 36 boys aged 9-18 years. The students exhibit a variety of severe and complex educational, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, which have impeded personal developmental and educational success. Many have a number of diagnoses. Our students have failed in, or been failed by, a variety of settings prior to their time at Eastwood Grange School. They arrive very disengaged with education and life after having experienced many crises and trauma.

Issue date: April 2019

Update: April 2021

Review due: April 2022

Author: Stuart Lees (Head Teacher)

Procedure	Complaints Policy and Procedure	OP03 v07
Associated Policy	Partnership with Parents and Carers Safeguarding Children (Education Services) Data Protection Incident Management, Reporting and Investigation Safeguarding Children (Anyone under the age of 18) Safeguarding Adults (Anyone aged 18 or over) Advocacy	ES27 ES53 OP02 OP04 OP06 OP08 OP17
Associated Regulation	The Protection of Children The Education Standard	12 8
Author	Tony Armstrong	Signature
Issue Date	April 2019	Review Date April 2021

PHILOSOPHY

Eastwood Grange School aims to provide a high standard of education and care in a safe environment.

In order to provide a high standard of education and care for the young people, Eastwood Grange School is happy to receive and discuss with you any comments, suggestions or complaints you may have.

This policy and procedure applies equally to parent/carers, staff at Eastwood Grange School and visitors, including placing authorities and those involved indirectly in the education and care of young people. This policy also applies to young people themselves.

Staff members are encouraged to resolve any issues or problems through their line manager, or can approach any senior member of staff if they prefer. Staff may request a supervision session for this purpose at any time.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Eastwood Grange School's procedure and Priory policy on:

- Anti-Bullying
- Safeguarding
- Whistle blowing

PRINCIPLES

Eastwood Grange School believes that it is in the best interest of the school, young people and staff to implement a procedure that will respond promptly and fairly to any worries or concerns.

Comments or complaints will be treated confidentially and will be taken seriously. Anonymous comments and complaints will be treated in the same way.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE

The Priory Group process for resolution of all complaints consists of three stages:

- (a) Stage 1 Local resolution at service/site level
- (b) Stage 2 Internal Review by the Group Complaints Co-ordinator
- (c) Stage 3 External Review by the Independent Complaint Panel*

* consists of at least one person on the panel who is independent of the management and the running of the school

At all stages of the procedure if the complainant wishes the matter to be considered further (and in an alternative way to that outlined in stages 1 – 3) then they can request that there is a hearing before a panel of three people who are not directly involved in any previous consideration of the complaint (one person on the panel will be independent of the management and the running of the school).

OUTCOMES

A record is kept at the school of all complaints. These records are kept in a confidential file. The information regarding complaints is only made available to the inspectors of regulatory bodies, or to the Secretary of State, on request.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the policy will be based upon monitoring of:

- Pupil views where appropriate;
- Family views;
- Professional judgements;
- Staff views – daily practitioners and seniors;
- Numbers of comments and complaints

The effectiveness of the policy and procedures will be reviewed annually, and the outcomes of monitoring will be used to make recommendation for improvement if necessary.

All findings are made available in writing to all relevant parties.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Priory Education Services, the Head Teacher and staff of Eastwood Grange School recognise that, despite the happy and positive environment that everyone strives to create, young people will at times feel that there is something they need to complain about.

It is essential that young people are made fully aware of the complaints procedure and that they know that their concerns will be listened to and taken seriously. We acknowledge that this is particularly important in a residential setting, when what may appear to be a trivial matter can cause

the young person great distress. The initial concern or complaint may also be an indication of a more serious problem that needs to be addressed.

As part of the staff induction programme all staff will be made aware of the importance of listening to young people's complaints and the school's procedures for dealing with complaints.

Each young person at Eastwood Grange School has access to personal contacts printed on it, along with name of the complaints officer, DSL, Child Line number and Ofsted contact details. Child line and Ofsted contact details are also displayed. During the young person's induction period the Transition and Intervention Lead will explain the complaints procedure.

If a young person expresses to any member of staff that he/she has a complaint he/she will be given the opportunity, with help from whomever he/she chooses, to fill in a complaints form. These forms will be forwarded to the young person's Key Worker, Class Teacher, or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Key Workers, Class Teachers, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may be able to take the action necessary or may need to pass it on to a senior member of staff via the school complaints officer (currently Lindsey Pidd, administrator). Young people will be kept informed and a senior member of staff will discuss the investigation with them within seven days. Pupil Voice information can be used to address issues or suggestions which may not reach a complaint stage; this addresses issues not sufficiently serious to lead to an official complaint.

Copies of all complaints are logged on the priority DATIX system within 48 hours of receipt and kept up to date with actions/outcomes. See L Pidd with regard to complaints, as she is the nominated officer.

PROCEDURE FOR STAFF

1. If a young person wishes to complete a Pupil Complaint form, if necessary staff should help the young person to complete the form (which can be requested from Lindsey Pidd). This form is to be passed to the school complaints officer and any appropriate action taken.
2. If you are able to deal with the complaint yourself, record on e-compliance what action you have taken, and pass it to the school complaints officer. The school complaints officer will follow up action taken and that all are happy with the outcome.
3. If you are unable to deal with the complaint yourself and need to refer it on, under 'Action Taken' detail to whom you pass the form and when. Make a note of the complaint and date in your notebook so that in 48 hours, you are able to go back to the person to whom you referred it and ask what has been done about it.
4. The complaints officer – On receiving a completed Complaints Form, check what action has been taken. If the complaint has been dealt with please conduct the follow up with the pupil/student who made the complaint. If further action has to be taken please note what action you take, and conduct a follow up. If you are unable to take appropriate action please refer the complaint to the senior management team meeting.
If you need further clarification on the procedure for handling students'/young people's complaints/concerns, please see your Line Manager or Head of Department.

TIMESCALES

- A minor complaint normally made verbally resolved the next working day
- An acknowledgement letter sent to complainant within 2 working days
- Aim to respond fully to all complaints within 20 days of receipt
- If at day 15 it is clear investigation and response will not be completed within agreed 20 days a further letter to be issued outlining reason for the delay and advising on a raised timeline

INTERNAL REVIEW (STAGE 2)

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after all attempts to resolve a complaint locally have failed, then they may, within 6 months of the date of the stage 1 formal response, request that their complaint be reviewed at Stage 2 of the priority process. The request must be in writing and forwarded to:

Group Complaints Co-ordinator
Priority Group Northern Office
Middleton St George
Darlington
Co. Durham DL2 1TS

OFSTED

If you do not feel that your complaint has been handled appropriately by the school. You are entitled to raise your concerns with OFSTED on 0300 123 4666.

NUMBER OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS DURING 2019 - 2020

0 (Zero)

APPENDIX 1: COMPLAINT PROCESS CHECKLIST: STAGE 1

	ACTIONS to be taken by Hospital Director, School Principal or Registered Home Manager/Service Manager or other Responsible Person:	Timescale	Date
1.	Complaint received, date stamped and envelope retained for proof of postage.	Upon receipt	
2.	Ensure that the complaint can be investigated i.e. it is not deemed 'out of time'. If 'out of time' respond to the complainant using OP Letter: 18 . <i>N.B. Refer to OP03 Complaints policy section 6.20. Discuss with Group Complaints Manager if in any doubt.</i>	Immediately	
3.	Open case file for investigation.	A.S.A.P	
4.	Enter details on the DATIX Complaint reporting system; noting the unique complaint Reference No.	Immediately	
5.	Assign investigating officer and add details to DATIX record.	Immediately	
6.	If part of the complaint requires a response from another responsible body e.g. a commissioning authority, social services etc. a copy of the complaint must be forwarded to them along with a request for a contribution to our own formal response, including a deadline for the provision of such contribution.	When assigned for investigation	
7.	Written acknowledgement sent to complainant using OP Letter: 18A . Letter MUST invite them to attend a meeting to discuss their concerns in more detail.	Within 2 working days of receipt	
8.	Alert the Group Complaints Manager and/or Group Risk Manager to the complaint if deemed serious, involving injury/loss, safeguarding concerns or posing a potential risk to business reputation (via email or by telephone if unsure as to seriousness).	Within 2 working days of receipt	
9.	Investigating officer to meet with complainant to discuss concerns in detail. Meeting MUST be minuted.	A.S.A.P	

10.	Investigating officer to continue with case investigation and collate reports, statements and other evidence from all interested parties. Advice/guidance is available from the Group Complaints Manager; with referral to the Complaint Surgery recommended in complex cases (see OP03 Complaint Policy - Appendix 2).	When assigned for investigation	
11.	If subsequent contact is made by the complainant following receipt of their original complaint, staff MUST acknowledge this contact in writing, assuring the complainant that any additional comments/concerns have been noted and WILL be taken into account.	Within 2 working days of receipt	
12.	If unable to complete investigation and respond within the 20 working day timeframe, issue a holding letter using OP Letter: 18B . The letter MUST ALWAYS provide specific reasons as to why we are not able to respond fully within the agreed timeframe.	No later than working day 15	
13.	Investigating officer to prepare investigation report and a draft response using OP Letter: 18C (and associated guidance) to be issued by HD, SP, RHM/SM. Comments/approval to be sought from the Group Complaints Manager/Group Risk Manager prior to issue where necessary.	Within the agreed/ extended timeframe for final response	
14.	Written response issued to complainant detailing investigation outcome together with any recommendations and actions to improve quality of service in going forward and explaining the process should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the way in which their complaint has been handled; including the offer to talk through any issues before escalating to Stage 2 internal review.	Within agreed/ extended timeframe	
15.	Update DATIX Complaint reporting system with full details of actions taken together with copies of ALL complaint related investigation documentation.	Throughout investigation process	
16.	Ensure that any quality improvement actions arising from complaint investigation are fully action planned and implemented in accordance with agreed timeframes.	To be separately action planned and closely monitored by the HD, SP, RHM/SM or person in charge of the site; as well as by Divisional Directors/Heads of Quality	

17.	CLOSE record on DATIX system at Stage 1.	Upon completion of ALL actions at Stage 1 - being mindful that a complainant has 6 months following the date of Stage 1 response to formally request case referral to Stage 2 – Internal Review	
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APPENDIX 2: COMPLAINT RECORD

(This form is for staff use, to record a verbal complaint, which they intend to try to resolve immediately or by the next working day. If resolution is successfully achieved within this timescale the complainant should be asked to sign to confirm their satisfaction. If not resolved to service user satisfaction, this form may be used to initiate a full investigation of the concerns perhaps further supported by more detailed information. The form must be filed in the complaint case file; with all complaints requiring recording on the DATIX Complaints system as soon as possible).

Service/Unit name:	Date & Time:	Details recorded by (staff name):
Name of complainant:	Service User <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address:	Relative <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Visitor <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other (provide details below) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Details of complaint		
Actions taken to address and resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant of steps.		

Complainant Signature		Date
Staff Name & Signature		Date
Entered on DATIX Complaint Reporting System:	Date	
	DATIX System Complaint No.	

