

Elevate-Ed Complaints and Grievance Policy

Last Updated: September 2025

Next Review Due: September 2026

Reviewed by: Aaron Guy, Proprietor / DSL, Georgia Guy Director / QA

1. Introduction

At Elevate-Ed, we value the feedback of learners, parents/carers, commissioners, and other stakeholders. This policy outlines our commitment to handling complaints in a fair, consistent, and timely manner, ensuring that all concerns are addressed appropriately and transparently.

2. Aims

- To provide a clear and transparent procedure for handling complaints.
 - To ensure complaints are dealt with promptly, thoroughly, and fairly.
 - To use feedback from complaints to improve our services and provision.
 - To maintain positive relationships with learners, parents/carers, and commissioners.
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3. Legal Framework

This policy complies with:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE, 2025)
 - Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
 - Other relevant Department for Education (DfE) guidance
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Proprietor (Aaron Guy):** Oversees implementation of the policy, ensures all complaints are handled appropriately, and reviews outcomes.
 - **Staff, Freelance Practitioners and Volunteers:** Handle initial concerns promptly and refer formal complaints to the proprietor.
 - **Parents/Carers, Commissioners and Learners:** Expected to raise concerns promptly and engage constructively with the complaints process.
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5. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- Concerns should be raised informally with the proprietor as soon as possible.
- Most issues can be resolved quickly through discussion.
- A response will be provided within five working days. If unresolved, the complainant may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

- Complaints must be submitted in writing to the proprietor, detailing the issue and desired outcome.
- Receipt will be acknowledged within three working days.
- The complaint will be investigated, and a written response provided within ten working days (or with an updated timeframe if longer is required).

Stage 3: Appeal

- If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 response, the complainant may appeal in writing within ten working days.
 - The appeal will be reviewed by an independent third party (not previously involved).
 - A hearing may be arranged where both parties can present their case.
 - A written decision will be issued within ten working days of the hearing. The decision is final.
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6. Recording and Monitoring Complaints

- A log of all formal complaints will be maintained, recording the complaint, investigation, outcome, and actions taken.
 - Complaints will be reviewed regularly to identify patterns and areas for improvement.
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7. Safeguarding Complaints

- Complaints involving safeguarding concerns (e.g., child protection, mental health, online safety) must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
 - In such cases, safeguarding procedures take precedence over the standard complaints process.
 - Complaints of this nature will be handled confidentially and may involve external authorities such as CADS or the police.
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8. Online Safety Complaints

- Complaints involving online safety (e.g., inappropriate digital interactions, cyberbullying, data breaches) will be managed in line with the Online Safety Policy.
 - These may be escalated to the DSL if they involve safeguarding concerns.
 - Personal data will be protected under GDPR.
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9. Mental Health and Wellbeing Complaints

- Complaints relating to mental health or wellbeing will be managed sensitively and referred to the appropriate senior staff member.
 - Where safeguarding is implicated, complaints will be escalated to the DSL.
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10. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All complaints will be handled with strict confidentiality.
 - Personal data will be processed in line with the Data Protection and Privacy Policy and UK GDPR.
 - Sensitive information will only be shared with authorised individuals or external agencies where legally required.
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11. Appeals Process

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within ten working days of receiving an outcome.
 - Appeals are reviewed by an independent third party.
 - For safeguarding-related complaints, external agencies may be involved.
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12. Unreasonable Complaints

- Complaints may be considered unreasonable if they are repetitive, vexatious, or harassing.
 - These will be reviewed by the proprietor, who will determine whether restrictions on communication are appropriate.
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13. Monitoring and Review

- Complaints handling will be monitored throughout the year.
 - This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if legislation or operational practice changes.
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Signed:

Aaron Guy - Proprietor / DSL

Georgia Guy - Director/QA

Date: September 2025