

ELEVATED

A Holistic Approach To The Education of Young People

Compliments and Complaints Policy

1. Introduction and Statement of Intent

ElevatEd AP Ltd is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience and ensuring the well-being and success of all its pupils. We believe that open communication and feedback are essential for continuous improvement. This policy outlines our clear, fair, and accessible procedures for receiving, handling, and responding to compliments and complaints from all stakeholders, including pupils, parents/carers, staff, and external partners.

We welcome compliments as they help us to recognise good practice and celebrate success. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn, resolve issues, and improve our services. All complaints will be treated seriously, confidentially, and resolved as quickly and effectively as possible. No individual will be discriminated against or disadvantaged for making a complaint in good faith.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and the specific needs of our provision.

Signed: Mark Aitken Date: 9/6/25 Review 8/6/26

Mark Aitken

2. Guiding Principles

- Accessibility: The policy is easily accessible and understood by all stakeholders.
- Fairness: All complaints will be investigated impartially and objectively.
- Confidentiality: Information relating to complaints will be handled with discretion and confidentiality, only shared on a "need to know" basis.
- Timeliness: Complaints will be addressed promptly and within defined timescales.
- Resolution: Our aim is to resolve complaints at the earliest possible stage.
- Learning: All feedback, both positive and negative, will be used to improve our services and practices.
- No Detriment: Individuals making complaints in good faith will not suffer any disadvantage.
- Mediation/Informal Resolution: Where appropriate, we will seek to resolve issues informally before moving to formal stages.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy covers:

- Compliments and feedback regarding the provision's performance, staff, or services.
- Complaints relating to the provision's operations, staff conduct, educational provision, safeguarding arrangements, or any other aspect of the service provided by ElevatEd AP Ltd.

This policy does not cover:

- Complaints about safeguarding matters already being handled under child protection procedures: These will be managed in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and statutory guidance (e.g., "Keeping Children Safe in Education").
- Staff disciplinary matters: These are handled under the provision's Staff Disciplinary Policy.

- Exclusions appeals: These are handled under the provision's Exclusions Policy and relevant statutory guidance.
- Admission decisions: These are handled under the provision's Admissions Policy.

4. Compliments Procedure

We actively encourage and welcome compliments and positive feedback. These help us to:

- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of staff and pupils.
- Reinforce good practice.
- Understand what we are doing well and how we can build on our strengths.

How to give a compliment:

Compliments can be given in the following ways:

- Verbally: Directly to a member of staff, the Head of Provision, or any other appropriate person.
- In writing: Via email to mark@elevate-ed.co.uk or letter to Head of School Mark Aitken, Unit 15A, Empress Business Centre, Chester Rd, Old Trafford, Stretford, Manchester, M16 9EA or via our website contact form.
- Via feedback surveys: Periodically, we may issue surveys to gather feedback.

All compliments will be shared with the relevant staff member(s) and, where appropriate, acknowledged and used to inform our practice.

5. Complaints Procedure

We aim to resolve most concerns or complaints quickly and informally. If an issue cannot be resolved informally, it can be escalated through the formal stages outlined below.

5.1 Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved quickly and informally by speaking directly with the relevant member of staff.

- Who to contact:
 - For issues relating to a specific session or pupil's day-to-day experience: The Head of Provision
 - For pastoral concerns or general pupil well-being: The Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - For transport or administrative issues: The Administrative Lead.
- Expected timeframe: We aim to resolve informal concerns within 5 working days.
- Outcome: The staff member will discuss the concern with you and seek to find a mutually acceptable resolution. A record of the discussion and outcome may be kept informally.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, or if the nature of the complaint is serious and you feel it cannot be addressed informally, you may proceed to Stage 2.

5.2 Stage 2: Formal Complaint - Investigation by the Head of Provision.

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if you deem the matter to be serious, you should submit a formal complaint in writing.

- How to make a formal complaint:
 - Complete the Formal Complaint Form: appendix 1
 - Send a letter or email clearly marked "Formal Complaint" to the Head of Provision
 - Ensure your complaint includes:
 - Your full name and contact details.
 - The nature of the complaint, providing as much detail as possible (what happened, when, where, who was involved).
 - Any relevant dates or times.
 - Attempts made to resolve the issue informally (if any).
 - What outcome you are seeking.

- Who to send it to: The Director of School Operations Mark Aitken (address above)
- Acknowledgement: You will receive a written acknowledgement of your complaint within 3 working days of receipt.
- Investigation: The Head of Provision:
 - Undertake a thorough and impartial investigation.
 - Gather all relevant information, including speaking to those involved and reviewing documentation.
 - May arrange a meeting with you to discuss the complaint further.
- Response: A written response detailing the findings of the investigation and any actions taken or proposed will be sent to you within 15 working days of the acknowledgement. If the investigation is complex and requires more time, you will be informed of the delay and given an estimated new response date.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, you may proceed to Stage 3.

5.3 Stage 3: Formal Complaint - Review by Independent Panel

- How to request a review: You must submit a written request for a Stage 3 review within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 2 response.
- Who to send it to: Independent Panel - Address
- Acknowledgement: You will receive a written acknowledgement of your request within 3 working days.
- Review Process:
 - The Independent Panel to review the complaint.
 - The review will consider the original complaint, the investigation conducted at Stage 2, and the findings and conclusions.
 - A meeting may be convened, involving the complainant, the Head of Provision, and any other relevant parties.

- The review body may seek further information or clarification.
- Outcome: A written response, detailing the findings of the review and the final decision of the provision, will be sent to you within 20 working days of the acknowledgement of the Stage 3 request. If the review is complex and requires more time, you will be informed of the delay and given an estimated new response date.
- Final Decision: The decision at Stage 3 is the final stage of the complaints procedure within Elevate Ed.

5.4 Complaints against the Director School Operations (Head of Provision)

- If the complaint is against the Head of Provision, it should be submitted directly to the Commissioning school or Independent Panel ?
- Then the Commissioning School/Independent Panel will then appoint an appropriate person to investigate the complaint. The process will then follow Stage 2 and Stage 3 procedures as outlined above.

6. Vexatious Complaints

ElevatEd AP Ltd is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially.

However, there may be occasions when complainants behave unacceptably.

While we recognise that complainants may be frustrated, we will not tolerate behaviour that is abusive, aggressive, or causes undue distress to staff.

A complaint may be deemed 'vexatious' if it is:

- Obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, or repetitive.
- Clearly unfounded and amounts to a general nuisance.
- Pursued in an aggressive or abusive manner.
- A complaint for which the provision has done everything reasonably possible to resolve.

In such circumstances, the Proprietor reserves the right to:

- Limit contact to written correspondence only.

- Specify one point of contact for the complainant.
- Refuse to respond to further communications on the same subject.
- Refer the matter to relevant authorities where necessary. Any decision to treat a complaint as vexatious will be made by the Proprietor and communicated in writing to the complainant, with reasons for the decision.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled with sensitivity and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the complaint. Personal data will be stored securely and retained only for as long as necessary in accordance with the provision's Data Retention Policy.

8. Monitoring and Review of Complaints

- All formal complaints, outcomes, and lessons learned will be recorded centrally by the Head of Provision
- This monitoring allows us to identify trends, address systemic issues, and continuously improve our services.
- The Compliments and Complaints Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current legislation and best practice.

Appendix 1: Formal Complaint Form

Please complete this form in full to enable us to investigate your complaint thoroughly.

Complainant Details:

Full Name:

Relationship to Pupil (if applicable):

Pupil's Name (if applicable):

Contact Address:

Contact Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Date:

Nature of Complaint:

Please provide a clear and concise description of your complaint. Include relevant dates, times, names of individuals involved, and any specific incidents.

Please attach any supporting documents.

(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Informal Resolution Attempts (if any):

Have you tried to resolve this complaint informally?