COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Mission Statement

WeST holds a deep-seated belief in education and lifelong learning. Effective collaboration, mutual support and professional challenge will underpin our quest to ensure that all of the children and adults we serve are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and succeed in life.

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This policy shall remain in effect until formally ratified at the next appropriate meeting

1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy and Procedure sets out the framework for how complaints are managed within all the schools/academies in the Westcountry Schools Trust. The Trust reserves the right to alter this process, in exceptional circumstances.

1.2 All academies and trusts must have a complaints procedure, which must meet the requirements in the standard at the Education (Independent School Standards (England) Regulations 2014 Schedule 1, Part 7. As the complaints policy is based upon Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, it only applies to complaints from parents/carers of pupils at one of the Trust's schools, regarding their child. The Chief Executive Officer may decide to use this procedure to deal with complaints from individuals who are not parents of a child at one of the Trust's schools. Please refer to Section 7 which outlines complaints that would be not captured by this policy. Concerns or complaints must be directed to the school/academy they relate to.

1.3 Complaints should be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and within 3 months from the date of the original incident, or of the last of a series of incidents (if this applies). Complaints received after 3 months may be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

1.4 We value our relationship with parents, carers and our local community and our schools/academies are happy to receive suggestions and comments which help us identify areas of success and where we could make improvements. We believe it is important that anyone who raises a complaint is treated seriously and that their complaint is dealt with promptly, courteously, fairly and in accordance with school-based escalation procedures. . We would ask complainants to respect confidentiality and refrain from publicising their complaint on social media, thereby allowing a direct and confidential right of response from the academy or school.

1.5 We want you as a parent/carer to be able to discuss any concern or complaint informally with staff in the school/academy so that they can be addressed in partnership. This would normally be with the class teacher or subject teacher in the first instance. If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, the Headteacher/Principal will refer you to another member of staff, so that your concern may be dealt with objectively. This is the first stage of the complaints procedure. At this stage, if you wish, you can pass your complaint to the school in writing

1.6 Complainants should not approach members of the WeST Community Council (WeST's local tier of governance) to raise concerns or complaints. Members of our WeST Community Councils have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at later stages of the procedure.

1.7 The school/academy will do its best to deal with your complaint and to put things right. We recognise that there may be occasions when parents/carers would like to raise a complaint formally. This is the second stage of our complaints procedure and would not be invoked unless, in the view of the academy or school, in-depth investigation is required or the dissatisfaction with some aspect of the school's policies, procedures, administration or management is sufficiently serious . You should be given clear information about how to proceed with a copy of this procedure.

1.9 We will not usually investigate anonymous complaints. However, we may determine exceptionally that the complaint warrants investigation.

2. Definition

2.1. For the purpose of this document:

a. Westcountry Schools Trust is referred to as The Trust;
b. School/academy refers to all schools/academies within the Trust;
c. Pupils refers to all pupils being educated or on site at any one of the schools/academies within the Trust.
d. School days are normally those on which the school/academy is open and are days on which the school/academy could reasonably be expected to receive, progress and respond to a complaint. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

3. Investigating Complaints

3.1. The aim is to address concerns, wherever possible without the need for formal procedures and whilst this policy outlines the complaints procedure, it does not in any way undermine efforts to resolve concerns informally. Formal procedures at stage 2 are invoked when initial attempts to resolve a complaint informally have been unsuccessful and the complainant has communicated that they wish to take the matter further.

3.2. When investigating a complaint, the aim is to:

a. Find out what has happened and who has been involved.
b. Clarify the complaint and what the parent/carer wants the school or Trust to do.
c. Contact the complainant if further information is required.

3.3. At every stage of the procedure, the ways in which a complaint can be resolved is at the forefront; and it is understood that it may be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part and, as a result, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

a. An apology;

b. An explanation;
c. An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
d. An assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur;
e. 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;
f. An undertaking to review individual Academy or Trust policies in the light of the complaint.

3.4. Following an investigation of events sometimes no clear conclusion may be drawn. We accept that this may be frustrating for all parties concerned.

3.5 If potential staff misconduct is identified as part of a complaint, this may be explored in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure and, as such, the timescales specified within this policy varied. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint, although they will be notified that the matter has been addressed and concluded in accordance with that procedure.

3.5. If following investigation, the complaint is considered to be vexatious the complainant will be informed in writing and no further action will be considered.

4. Complaints Procedure

4.1 The complaints procedure follows a three-stage process, which is detailed below. The relevant forms can be found at Appendix A & B:

- Stage 1 – Informal
- Stage 2 – Formal
- Stage 3 – Complaints Committee Meeting

4.2 **Stage 1 - Informal Complaint**

a. An informal complaint submitted in person, by email to the school complaints email (see Appendix 3) or by telephone should be recorded using Appendix 1.This must include details of the complaint AND what outcome the complaint is seeking to resolve matters.
b. It is in all parties' interests to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage. The aim will be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school/academy and the complainant.
c. The concern or complaint will be explored by a member of staff within the school/academy it relates to, who is not subject to or had any involvement with the subject matter. At this stage, this will not normally be the Headteacher
d. If a complaint is made to a member of a WeST Community Council , it will be passed to the school/academy, as the WeST Community Council member

may need to be involved at a later stage in the process.

e. Complaints about the professional conduct of headteachers will be referred to a member of the Trust central leadership team.
f. The aim is to resolve all informal complaints within ten school days.
g. At the conclusion the assigned member of the school staff/leadership team will provide a written response of the outcome and proposed resolution.
h. If the complaint remains un-resolved the complainant can make a request for their complaint to be dealt with under the formal stage 2 of the complaints process (see section 4.3). For this to be considered, the complainant must submit their request within 10 school days of receipt of the outcome at the informal stage, preferably using the form at Appendix 2, giving details of the complaint, action already taken to resolve it and proposed further actions to resolve the problem.
i. A complaint can be escalated straight to stage 2 of the complaints procedure, if, in the view of the academy or school, in-depth investigation is required or the dissatisfaction with some aspect of the school's policies, procedures, administration or management is sufficiently serious.

4.3 Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

a. An unresolved concern or informal complaint under Stage 1, or a complaint which is a more serious dissatisfaction with some aspect of the school's policies, procedures, management or administration will be dealt with under Stage 2.
b. The complainant must set out their complaint using the Complaint Form at Appendix 2,with the assistance of the school if required. Failure by the complainant to provide the required information within the timeframe specified may result in a delay or the dismissal of the complaint. The timeframes in this policy will run from the point at which all required information is submitted via the Complaint Form.
c. Complaints about the professional conduct of headteachers will be referred to a member of the Trust central leadership team. A complaint about the professional conduct of any member of the Trust central services will be referred to their line manager or to a colleague at the same level as their line manager.
d. Complaints about a member of a WeST Community Council must be made to the Clerk to the Trustees and will be referred to the Chair of the Trust Board, who will appoint a Trustee independent of the school/academy to investigate.
e. The Headteacher or other Responsible Officer will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt in writing (by letter or email) normally within 3 school days. If full information has not been provided by the complainant the acknowledgement will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant seeks. If full information has been provided the acknowledgement will indicate the action being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.
f. The Headteacher or other Responsible Officer may delegate the

investigation to another appropriate senior leader, but not the decision to be taken.

g. The Headteacher or other Responsible Officer may where appropriate nominate a suitably skilled member of the WeST Community Council to be a co-Investigator.
h. The person(s) investigating the complaint will, if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those being complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish and keep a written record of any meetings/interviews related to the investigation. Interviews should normally be conducted face to face, but if necessary, interviews may be conducted virtually
i. At the conclusion the Headteacher or other Responsible Officer will provide a formal written response of the outcome and proposed resolution within 15 school days from the receipt of the complaint. If the complaint is received within 15 days of a school holiday it may take longer to resolve.
j. If it is not possible to meet this deadline, the complainant will be provided with an update and a revised response date.
k. 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.
l. The Headteacher or other Responsible Officer will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2.

4.4 Stage 3 – Complaints Committee Panel

a. If the complainant remains dissatisfied following Stage 2 and wishes to take the complaint further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 3, a complaints committee meeting.

   This panel of the complaints committee will comprise three members who have had no prior connection with the complaint. These could include:

   - members of the WeST Community Council of which the school is a member
   - members of a different WeST Community Council
   - trustees
   - a trust leadership executive

   This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

b. A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be put in writing within 15 school days of the outcome at Stage 2, addressed to the Clerk to the Board of Trustees (clerk@weststst.org.uk). Requests received outside this timeframe will only be considered if the Trust considers that exceptional circumstances apply.
c. The written complaint should state clearly the reason for the complaint,

explain clearly what steps have been taken to resolve the complaint so far by the academy/school and why this has not been satisfactory and outline the desired outcome from the complaint using Appendix 2.

d. The aim of the Stage 3 complaints appeal panel will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the academy/school and the complainant.
e. Prior to the panel meeting, panel members will decide amongst themselves who will act as its Chair .
f. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing, which could include email, usually within three school days of receipt. The acknowledgement will indicate the next steps in the process.
g. The panel will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to the meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.
h. At least 10 school days before the panel meeting the appointed Clerk to the panel should write to the complainant to inform them of the date, time and venue of the meeting and to invite the complainant to the meeting should they choose to attend. The notification will also include a request that copies of any further written material to be submitted to the panel is provided at least five school days before the meeting. The panel will not usually accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly.
i. The complaints panel should usually meet no later than 20 school days after the date of receipt of the complaint under Stage 3 and, if this is not possible, the Clerk will keep the complainant informed.
j. At this stage the panel will not review any new complaints or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.
k. If the complainant rejects the panel meeting date without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting and it will proceed in the complainant's absence with written submissions from both parties.
l. The complainant may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, legal representatives will not be permitted. There may be occasions when a school employee is called as a and may wish to be supported by their union..
m. Complaints about staff conduct will not be handled under the complaints procedure. Complainants will be informed that matters will be considered under the trust disciplinary procedure, if appropriate. They will be informed once this has been concluded, but disciplinary outcomes will not be shared.
n. Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.
o. The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted unless all parties agree this is a suitable means of producing notes of the meeting
p. The panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The panel may uphold the complaint in whole or in part or dismiss the complaint in whole or in part. 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 and where appropriate, recommend changes to school/academy systems or

procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

q. The Chair of the panel will provide the complainant, the person complained about (if relevant), the school/academy and the Chair of the Trust Board with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 10 school days. The decision reached is final.
r. The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response if they behave reasonably within the course of their complaint and:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible, along with how they might matters resolved.
- In the case of formal stages, submit the complaint using the Complaint Form.
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint.
- respond promptly to requests for information, meetings or to agree details
- ask for assistance as needed.
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect.
- refrain from publicising their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

We define unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of the complaint. This is outlined in Section 8 along with our approach in response to such behaviour.

Investigator

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 through:
    - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish full facts.
    - interviewing staff and children/young people/others relevant to the complaint.
    - consideration of records and other relevant information.
    - analysing information.
- liaising with the complainant to clarify what they feel would put things right.

The investigator should:

- Seek advice from HR where the subject of the complaint identifies potential staff misconduct (see Appendix 4).

- 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.
- ensure that papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal.
- be mindful of the timescales to respond.
- prepare a comprehensive report for the Headteacher/Responsible Officer or complaints committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The Headteacher or complaints committee/Stage 3 Appeal Panel will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Responsible officer

The responsible officer should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure.
- liaise with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure.
- be aware of issues regarding:
    - sharing third party information.
    - additional support to the complainant
- keep records.

Clerk

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the panel 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 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 parent is invited to attend and that the venue and proceedings are accessible.
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 and/or 2 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale.
- record the proceedings.
- circulate the minutes of the meeting.
- notify all parties of the panel's decision.

Panel Chair

The panel chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure

that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) 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, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy.
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease.
- 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; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting.
- both the complainant and the school 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 Clerk.

Panel Members

Panel members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent, impartial and should be seen to be so. No member of a hub advisory board may sit on the committee 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 and the complainant. We 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.

6. Record Keeping

A copy of the Committee's findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on school premises by the complainant and the Headteacher or other Responsible Officer. A written record will be kept of all complaints and

- whether they were resolved following a formal procedure, or proceeded to a Committee/Panel and
- action taken by the school/academy/Trust as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) and

- 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.

7. Exempt Complaints

This procedure covers complaints from parents / carers of pupils at one of the Trust's schools. The Chief Executive Officer may decide to use this procedure about any provision of community facilities or services by the Trust and its schools/academies, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below:

Exceptions	Further Information
Complaints previously dealt with	This means a complaint raised by a complainant which has already been dealt with using the procedures outlined in this policy, and which raises no new matter and presents no new information. This may include a complaint which differs slightly from the original complaint, but which is substantially the same as the complaint previously dealt with.
Serial/persistent and unreasonable complaints	This means a complaint which may be substantially different from complaints previously received but is submitted by a complainant who may be considered unreasonably persistent. A complainant will not be considered unreasonably persistent solely on the basis that he or she has submitted previous complaints. However, matters such as volume of correspondence, the effect on the Trust's resources of dealing with the complainant, the importance or triviality of the complaint, and the direct impact of the matter complained of on the complainant will be considered factors in determining whether the complaint is an exempt complaint. For further information **see Section 8 – Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints**
Admissions to schools Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs School re-organisation proposals	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with the relevant local authority
Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Exceptions	Further Information
Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions. **complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure*
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.
National Curriculum – content	Please contact the Department for Education at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus
Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed and when any school process has concluded
Complaints about matters outside of the Trust's control	This means a complaint about the activities of persons or organisations not under the direct control of the Trust (for example, complaints by one parent against another).
Complaints about decisions of the Board of Trustees	Decisions made by the Board of Trustees are not subject to review by Trust employees or individual trustees, and any dissatisfaction in respect of any such decision should be addressed to the Board of Trustees (c/o the Chair of Trustees). The Board will consider such representations at a duly convened meeting but shall not be obliged to reconsider their decision.
Complaints about Trustees or Committees of the Board acting under their delegated powers	This means a complaint about the activities of trustees or committees of the Board, who are acting under the powers delegated to them by the Board of Trustees. These are subject to the Code of Conduct and other policies adopted

Exceptions	Further Information
	by the Board, and subject to review by the full Board of Trustees; concerns in respect of such matters should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees (or the Vice Chair if the concern is in relation to the activities of the Chair), who will take such action within his/her powers as s/he considers to be appropriate.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.
If a complainant commences legal action against the school/academy/trust in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

8. Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints*

The Trust and its schools and academies are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will act to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

We define unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, 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 complaints investigation process.
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure.
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice.
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered 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 seeking 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 their complaint where the complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education.

- seeks an unrealistic outcome.
- makes excessive demands on school 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.
- uses threats to intimidate.
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence.
- knowingly provides falsified information.
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their 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.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher, a director or Chair to the Trust Board will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the school/academy/trust causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

The Trust also reserves the right to conclude an investigation without further involvement from the complainant, or choose not to conclude an investigation, if the complainant's behaviour remains unreasonable.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from the school or taking legal action.

**** This approach will also be adapted to manage unreasonable or persistent contact not directly associated with, or resulting from, formal complaints.***

9. The Role of Other Bodies

A complaint about the Trust or an individual Academy/school within the Trust can be referred by a member of the public to the ESFA.

9.1 The role of the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) on behalf of the Secretary of State:

If a complaint is referred to the ESFA, the ESFA will check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by the Trust. The ESFA will only consider complaints that fall into the following three areas:

a. Where there is undue delay, or the Trust did not comply with its own procedure when considering a complaint

b. Where the Trust is in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State
c. Where a Trust has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

It is unlikely that the ESFA will overturn a Trust's decision about a complaint. However, the ESFA will request that the complaint is looked at again from the appropriate stage, if there has been a breach in its own complaints procedure. If the procedure does not meet the regulation the Trust will be required to rectify any aspects that do not meet the regulations.

Please use follow the process outlined in the ESFA's Complaints Procedure:
Complaints procedure - Education and Skills Funding Agency - GOV.UK.

9.2 **The role of the (DfE) Department for Education**

You may complain to the DfE if you have remain dissatisfied and have followed the Westcountry Schools Trust Complaints Policy and Procedure and followed all of the 'Make a Complaint' steps on the DfE website https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/state-schools.

You may do this via the online via school complaints form https://www.gov.uk/complain-to-dfe or at the postal address below:
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

9.3 **The role of Ofsted**

You can complain to Ofsted if you think a school is not run properly.
https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints
You must have already followed the Trust's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Version History Log

Version	Release Date	Description of Change/Comments
v.2	October 2025	Change from HAB to WeST CC Clarity around staff vs complaints procedures Formatting changes and improved language throughout Addition of school complaints, WeST and clerk email addresses
v.1	December 2024	No change
v.1	December 2023	

Appendix 1. Record of Concern or Informal Complaint

Name of the School/Academy:		
Complainant name:	In person or by phone?	Address:
Contact Numbers & Email:		Date & Time:
Complaint		
Details of the complaint:		
What actions do you feel will resolve the problem at this stage?		
Complaint Recorded by:		
Acknowledge that the person will be contacted, and by when		
Office Use: Who complaint has been passed on to: Date and time:		

Appendix 2. Formal Complaint Form

Name of the School/Academy:		
Surname:	First Name:	Address:
Contact Numbers & Email:		If applicable – name of pupil and relationship to the pupil:
Complaint – to be completed by the complainant		
Details of the complaint:		
Action already taken to resolve the complaint:		

What actions do you feel will resolve the problem at this stage?
Details of additional information or evidence attached:

Signature (Form sent by email is classified as the signature):	Date:

An acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent within 3 working days
Office Use: Date acknowledgement sent: By whom: Complaint referred to: Date:

Appendix 3. School Complaints Email addresses

School name	Complaints Email Address
Ashburton Primary School	Complaints@ashburton-primary.devon.sch.uk
Austin Farm Primary School	Complaints@austinfarmacademy.com
Boringdon Primary School	Complaints@boringdon.plymouth.sch.uk
Buckfastleigh Primary School	Complaints@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk
Callington Community College	Complaints@callingtoncc.net
Camelford Primary School	Complaints@camelford.cornwall.sch.uk
Chaddlewood Primary School	Complaints@chaddlewoodschool.org.uk
Coombe Dean School	Complaints@coombedean.co.uk
Eggbuckland Community College	Complaints@eggbuckland.com
Ermington Primary School	Complaints@erm.westst.org.uk
Glen Park Primary School	Complaints@glenpark.plymouth.sch.uk
Hele's School	Complaints@heles.plymouth.sch.uk
Holbeton Primary School	Complaints@hol.westst.org.uk
Ivybridge Community College	Complaints@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk
Manor Primary School	Complaints@manor.devon.sch.uk
Morley Meadow Primary School	Complaints@morleymeadowprimary.org.uk
Oreston Community Academy	Complaints@oreston.com
Otterham Primary School	Complaints@otterham.cornwall.sch.uk
Plymstock School	Complaints@plymstockschool.org.uk
Plympton St Maurice Primary School	Complaints@psmps.co.uk
Sherford Vale School	Complaints@sherfordvaleschool.co.uk
Sir James Smith's School	Complaints@sirjamessmith.cornwall.co.uk
St Breward Primary	Complaints@st-breward.cornwall.sch.uk
Stowford School	Complaints@stowford.devon.sch.uk
St Teath C P School	Complaints@st-teath.cornwall.sch.uk
South Dartmoor Community College	Complaints@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk
Ugborough Primary School	Compliants@ugborough.devon.sch.uk
Wembury Primary School	Complaints@wembury-primary.devon.sch.uk
Woodford Primary School	Complaints@wps.plymouth.sch.uk
Woodlands Park Primary	Complaints@wpp.westst.org.uk
Yealmpton Primary	Complaints@yea.west.org.uk
Westcountry Schools Trust	Complaints@westst.org.uk