Complaints Procedure

Updated in September 2025

Ashcroft Technology Academy (the Academy) is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the best possible education and support for all students. From time to time, parents may have concerns or wish to make a formal complaint. This policy sets out how the Academy will respond.

This procedure applies only to parents or carers of students currently on roll at the Academy. It does not cover complaints from other parties, nor does it apply to matters where alternative statutory processes apply (e.g. admissions appeals, exclusions, or matters of staff employment). Complaints will not be accepted from third parties, former students, or parents of students who have left the Academy.

If a student leaves the Academy during the course of a complaint, the full complaints procedure will not be applicable. If this happens, the complaint will be looked into with any identified shortcomings resolved in future planning or staff training.

It is important to distinguish between a **concern** and a **complaint**:

- A **concern** is an expression of worry or dissatisfaction which can usually be resolved quickly and informally by speaking with the relevant member of staff. The Academy encourages parents to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity, so that matters can be clarified and resolved without the need for escalation.

- A **complaint** is a formal expression of dissatisfaction made in writing by a parent or carer regarding the Academy's actions or decisions. Complaints will be managed under the stages described below once informal resolution has not been possible.

Complaints should be raised within **one month** of the incident or issue arising. Complaints made outside this timeframe will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

The formal process will only commence after reasonable attempts to resolve concerns informally have been made with an unsatisfactory outcome. Reasonable attempts include a face-to-face meeting at the Academy.

The Academy aims to resolve complaints promptly. Timeframes for each stage are set out below; where it is not possible to meet these timescales, the Academy will inform the complainant of the reason for the delay and provide a revised timescale.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint against the behaviour (not a policy decision) of the Principal, they must follow stage 2 of the formal process.

Stage 1 – Formal Investigation

1. A parent or carer who wishes to make a formal complaint must submit it in writing to the Principal. The complaint should set out the issues clearly, including relevant details and the outcome sought.

2. The Principal (or their delegate) will investigate the complaint and provide a written response within **10 school days**.

3. The response will explain the outcome of the investigation and any steps the Academy will take as a result.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1, they may request progression to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Executive Board Review

1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Stage 1 response, or if the complaint refers to the Principal, they may request a review by the Chair of the Executive Board (or their delegate). This request must be made in writing to the Principal's P.A. within **10 school days** of receiving the Stage 1 response.

2. The Chair of the Executive Board (or their delegate) will consider the written complaint, the Stage 1 response, and any further submissions. In exceptional circumstances, the parent might be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint.

3. The Chair of the Executive Board (or their delegate) will issue a written decision within **10 school days** of receiving the complaint, or as soon as is reasonably possible should they be unavailable to deal with the matter within the timescale prescribed.

4. The decision of the Chair of the Executive Board (or their delegate) is final and marks the end of the Academy's complaints procedure.

Monitoring and Record-Keeping

- A record will be kept of all formal complaints and their outcomes.

- All records will remain confidential except where disclosure is required by law.

Complaints That Fall Outside This Procedure

Certain issues are not covered by this procedure, as they have separate processes:

- Admissions and appeals
- Permanent exclusions
- Safeguarding matters
- Staff disciplinary or grievance procedures

Policy Review

This Complaints Procedure will be reviewed annually by the Executive Board to ensure it remains compliant with statutory guidance and best practice.