



Knole Academy

**Creativity in Learning
Confidence to Achieve**

COMPLAINTS POLICY

For use by non-parents of students at the academy and for complaints regarding Knole Enterprises

May 2024

Preface

Safeguarding:

The safeguarding of children and young people underpins the work of the academy and must be adhered to as a prime responsibility.

Equality:

The Knole Academy is committed to providing all staff, students, parents, visitors and members of the wider community using the sites with equality of opportunity regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. All policies are screened for their impact on equality and issues are addressed if they arise. Knole Academy will provide special consideration on an individual basis if anyone is considered to have a specific special need.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

Complaints Policy

Introduction

The majority of issues raised by non-parents are concerns rather than complaints. The academy and Knole Enterprises is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without recourse to formal procedures. However, in those instances where a complainant doesn't feel a concern has been addressed, or it is of sufficient gravity, then the academy's formal complaints procedure should be used. The prime aim of the academy's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly, impartially and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

This policy is available to non-parents of students at the academy and clients of Knole Enterprises, Parents of students at the academy and parents of prospective students should use the complaints procedure for parents. It is available on the website.

This policy follows DfE guidelines for best practice, however it is not statutorily bound as it does not pertain to complaints made by parents.

Written records of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing will be kept.

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint.

A **concern** is defined as "an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought".

The academy and Knole Enterprises will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible.

A **complaint** is defined as "an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action".

The academy and Knole Enterprises intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

Legislation and Guidance

This document is based on guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on [creating a complaints procedure that complies with the above regulations](#), and has been produced in line with the [Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints Procedures 2019](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

The academy's procedure is as follows:

Raising a concern

Concerns and informal complaints can be raised with the academy or Knole Enterprises at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. If the concern relates to the academy, it should be sent to the school enquiries where it will be forwarded to the appropriate person. If it relates to Knole Enterprises, it should be forwarded to the Sport and Leisure manager. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case there will be an informal but informed response usually within five working days. It is anticipated that the vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. There will usually then be a meeting with the complainant.

Where no resolution is found, the complainant may take their informal complaint to the Headteacher, or Chair of Governors if the complaint is about the Headteacher.

Making a formal complaint

Where there is no resolution to an informal complaint or concern, a formal complaint should be made using the form set out in Appendix A. This should be put in writing and sent to the academy, addressed to the Headteacher or where the complaint is concerning the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The academy will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint **within two working weeks** of receiving it; an appropriate member of LT will be asked to investigate the complaint. In many cases this response will also report on the action the academy has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further and an investigation may take place. Complainants will usually be given five working days’ notice of the meeting. The Headteacher will explain the decision to the complainants and any relevant findings of the investigation. There is no right to appeal this decision.

There is an expectation that all attendees at the panel meeting will be civilised and courteous to one another. Should this not be the case, the Headteacher may adjourn the meeting.

The Remit of the Complaints’ meeting

The Headteacher will:


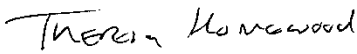
- Listen to the complaint and ask questions
- Listen to the academy’s Knole Enterprises statement of events and ask questions
- Make findings and recommendations.
- Ensure a clerk minutes the meeting and writes formally to all parties concerned with the outcomes of the panel’s findings.

The academy staff will:

- Ensure that written records of formal complaints are kept on file
- Stipulate whether complaints are resolved
- Record any action taken by the academy as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld)

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body monitors the effectiveness of the complaints procedure regularly, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

APPROVED Teaching & Learning Committee	03.05.24. Ratified by the Full Governing Body on 26.6.24		
SUGGESTED REVIEW DATE	May 2027		
SIGNED HEADTEACHER		PRINT NAME	Mr D Collins
SIGNED CHAIR OF GOVERNORS		PRINT NAME	Miss T Homewood

Appendix A

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Headteacher's PA who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?**

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: