

Complaints Procedure – Parent Guide

This procedure applies to all parents of children attending a TMET school.

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Ratified by:	Board of Trustees
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Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.0	Aug 2026	CBR	New document

See also:

- TMET Complaints Procedure
- Parentkind [Parent Guide to School Complaints](#)

1. How we deal with concerns and complaints

Your child's experience is important to us. We want to work with you so your child is happy at school and can do their best. If you feel something has gone wrong, please tell us.

Step one: Talk to us

It is usually best to start by speaking to your child's teacher as soon as you can. Please tell them what happened and what you would like us to do. They will reply as soon as they can, usually within five school days.

If we still need to do more after this first conversation, you can make a formal complaint. This means putting your concern in writing.

Step two: Write to us

If you are still worried, you can write to us with a formal complaint. Please include what happened, who was involved, who you have already spoken to, and what you would like us to do next.

You don't need to write a long letter – in fact, keeping it short usually helps us reply more quickly. We have a form that asks for the details we need (Appendix A) – you don't have to use this but it is helpful if you do.

We will tell you we have received your complaint within five school days. If we are not clear about your concern, we may ask to meet or speak with you first. We will tell you if we need more information and who will deal with your complaint. Wherever possible, this will be someone who was not involved in the issue.

After we have looked at your complaint, we will send you a formal reply. This will explain our response and any actions we have taken, or plan to take. We will usually do this within 20 school days.

For more difficult concerns, we may suggest a meeting with someone from outside the school. This can help us understand the issue and try to find a way forward.

Step three: Meet with a Complaint Panel

If we cannot agree, you can ask for a formal meeting about your complaint. This is called a complaint panel meeting. You should ask for this within 10 school days of getting our formal reply.

The panel will have at least three people. They will not have been directly involved in the complaint. One person will also be independent, which means they are not part of the day-to-day running of the school.

We will do our best to agree a time and date with you for the meeting, usually within 20 school days. The meeting will usually be in person, but it can be held online if that is more convenient for everyone. You can bring someone to the meeting to help you, for example a friend or relative.

After the meeting, the panel will send its recommendations to you and to anyone you complained about. The school principal and the Trust will also get a copy.

There are more details about how panels run in Appendix B.

A panel meeting is the final step in the Trust's complaints process. If you are still not happy, you can complain to the Department for Education using the complaint form on [their website](#). The Department can check whether we followed the right process. It will not investigate the original complaint again.

2. Other things that are good to know

Who can raise concerns

The Trust Complaints Procedure is for parents and carers of children who currently attend the school. If you are not a parent or carer at the school, you can still contact us. We will look at your concern outside this process.

The type of concerns we can consider

This process is for general concerns about how our school is run. Some concerns must follow a different process because of the law or rules schools must follow. This includes admissions, suspensions and exclusions, safeguarding, staff complaints, staff discipline, and whistleblowing. If another process is better, we will tell you and explain what to do next.

Time scales

Please tell us about a problem within three months of it happening. We cannot usually look into older problems. We will try to meet the timescales in this guide. If the issue is complicated, we may need more time. We will tell you if this happens.

If at any point we haven't heard from you for four weeks after our reply, we will write to you to close your enquiry – but you can ask us to re-open it if there are special circumstances.

Help from other organisations

We understand you might want to raise concerns with other organisations that oversee the work we do, such as the Government or Ofsted. It is best to talk to us first and go through

the steps in this guide because it helps us put things right more quickly and avoids duplicating work for you and for us.

In most cases external organisations will expect you to have completed our complaints procedure before getting involved.

Duplicate enquiries

We will usually consider and reply to concerns individually. If we receive lots of similar concerns at the same time – for example from a campaign group – we may decide to deal with them together and send you a shared reply that responds to common concerns.

Mutual respect

Most concerns are sorted out well when we work together. We know that complaints can feel upsetting or stressful. We ask everyone to speak and write respectfully. If behaviour becomes abusive, threatening or unreasonable, or if someone will not take part in the process, it can be harder to help. In these cases, we may pause the complaint or set fair limits on contact.

Confidentiality

Some complaints include private information about other pupils or staff. We will share as much information as we can, but we must also protect other people's privacy and legal rights. We will keep a written record of written complaints, panel meetings, and any actions we take.

We will keep details confidential but we may need to share them with the Secretary of State for Education or an inspection organisation like Ofsted if they ask to see them.

3. If you need help raising concerns

We want this process to be easy to use. If you need help to explain your complaint, the school office can give advice or suggest independent support. We will consider requests for support, such as an interpreter, an accessible meeting room, or information in another format.

4. Using AI

Some people use AI tools to help organise their thoughts. We do not recommend using public AI tools for complaints. They may store or share personal information, including sensitive details about your child. AI tools can also include wrong information, such as old rules or laws from other countries. This can slow down our reply. Please check anything written by AI carefully before sending it to us.

If we are finding it difficult to clearly identify the key concerns from what you have shared, we may suggest a meeting or call to help us focus on what matters most and respond as accurately and helpfully as possible.

5. Help with special educational needs

We work with the local authority to support children with special educational needs and disabilities, known as SEND. We will always try to help. Some things are outside the school's control, so we may need to refer you to the local authority.

- **What we are responsible for:** We provide teaching, support from our school resources, and reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments are changes that help your child take part in school. We monitor your child's progress, put support plans in place, and review these with you.
- **What the local authority is responsible for:** The local authority decides whether to assess a child for an Education, Health and Care Plan, known as an EHCP. It also writes and maintains the EHCP, and provides the funding and services listed in it.
- **What an EHCP sets out:** An EHCP explains your child's needs, the support they should get, and who must provide it. Schools must provide the parts of the plan they are responsible for. The local authority must provide the parts it is responsible for.

Some support depends on national or local funding decisions. These are outside our control. We will always do our best with the resources we have. If you are not sure who is responsible for part of your child's SEND support, please ask.

Appendix A: TMET Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the appropriate person via the school/Trust office

Your name:		
Pupil's name (if relevant):		
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):		
Your address:		
Postcode:		
Daytime telephone number:		
Evening telephone number:		
Email address:		
Please state whether your complaint concerns a school (if so please name the school) the Trust, The Mead Institute of Professional Learning, its Apprenticeships, the Teaching School Hub or the SCITT:		
Please give details of your complaint, including • whether you have spoken to anybody at the school/Trust/ The Mead Institute /Teaching School Hub/SCITT about it (who and when) • whether you have taken any actions to try to resolve it • the outcomes of these discussions/actions		
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 form received:		Date acknowledgment sent:
Received by:		Acknowledgment sent by:
Complaint referred to:		
Date:		

Appendix B: Parent Guide to Complaint Panels

We encourage parents and carers to talk to us informally about any concerns first. If we cannot agree a way forward, you can make a formal written complaint and we will send you a written response. If we still cannot agree, you can ask for a complaint panel meeting.

This summary gives you more information about what you can expect at a panel meeting. If you would like to discuss it further, please contact the Trust Complaints Team.

Meet with a complaint panel

If you don't agree with our written response from Stage Two, you can ask for a formal meeting to discuss your concerns. This is called a complaint panel meeting.

To ask for a panel meeting, contact the Trust Complaints Team. Their details will be in the Stage Two response letter. Please explain briefly why you are not happy and what you would like us to do. You should usually ask within 10 school days of our Stage Two response, unless there are special circumstances. This helps everyone remember what happened and helps us put things right quickly.

The panel meeting will look again at your original complaint. It will also look at any concerns you have about how we dealt with it. It will not look at any new complaints.

What to expect next

We will do our best to agree a time and date with you for the meeting, usually within 20 school days of your request. The meeting will usually be in person, but it can be held online if that is more convenient for everyone.

Please let us know if you need help to attend, like an accessible meeting room or an interpreter. Around a week before the meeting we will provide you and the panel members copies of letters and other relevant information.

Who will be at the meeting

The panel will have at least three people. They will not have been directly involved in the complaint. One person will be independent, which means they are not part of the day-to-day running of the school. A member of staff will take notes and help with the process.

People involved in the complaint may also attend, or they may give their views in writing. We will not normally ask pupils to attend.

You can bring someone, like a friend or relative, to the meeting to help you. If your complaint is about a member of staff, they may bring a friend or colleague to support them.

The meeting is confidential and is not open to the public or the media.

What will happen at the meeting

One panel member will lead the meeting. They will ask you to explain your concerns. The panel may ask you questions. They may also speak to other people involved in the complaint.

The meeting is not a legal hearing. You do not need to bring a lawyer. People will not be questioned in the way they would be in court.

Before the meeting ends, you will have another chance to share your views.

In most cases, the panel will not give a decision straight away. They will talk about your concerns and what they have heard. They will write to you later with their recommendations.

After the meeting

After the meeting, the panel will send their recommendations to you and to anyone you have complained about. The school principal and the Trust will also get a copy.

A panel hearing is the end of the Trust's complaints procedure. If you are still not happy, you can complain to the Department for Education using the complaint form on [their website](#). The Department can look at whether we have handled your complaint properly, but it won't investigate the details of any underlying complaint.