



KING EDWARD VI  
SHELDON HEATH ACADEMY

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

**Friendship**  
Integrity Benevolence  
Honesty **Equality**  
Respect Community  
**Tolerance** Aspiration  
**Our values**  
Humility Personal responsibility  
**Justice** Dignity Ambition  
Co-operation **Humanity**  
Excellence Embracing diversity  
**Belief** Empathy Kindness  
Understanding **Charity**  
**Compassion**

This policy was adopted by the Student Welfare Committee in January 2018.

Next review due Spring Term 2020, or earlier if the need arises; Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process and make any necessary modifications to this policy.

This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

## **1. Rationale**

The Academy believes that it provides a well-rounded education, which extends beyond academic study and that it creates a secure and caring environment in which children can experience success. The Academy Governors, the Principal and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with students and their families. However, the Academy is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by students and/or their parents/carers. The following policy sets out the procedure that the Academy follows in such cases.

## **2. Guidance**

A 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as any expression of dissatisfaction either verbally or in writing, in respect of the education a student is receiving or other matter that is the direct responsibility of the Academy. It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures. The Academy will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. There are occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. In those cases, the Academy's formal procedure should be invoked through the stages outlined within this policy.

This policy and procedure is for the benefit of students and their parents/carers at the Academy and will be relied upon in respect of all complaints students and their parents/carers made against the Academy except in respect of:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters and child protection allegations
- Exclusions
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievance and Staff discipline
- Appeals relating to assessment decisions for external qualifications
- Complaints made by members of the public about the Academy.

The Academy has separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the SENCO and if they remain unresolved can then be dealt with under this complaints policy. Complaints about services provided by other providers who use the Academy's premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

This policy in no way overrides the right of the Academy to act in accordance with the Academy's Terms and Conditions agreed by parents upon enrolment of their child as a student in the Academy.

## **3. Aim**

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services that the Academy provides, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as exclusions or admissions). The Academy does not limit complaints to parents or carers of children that are registered at the Academy. Students may also raise concerns and complaints under this policy; the Academy will involve parents should this occur.

All complaints to the Academy are handled sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level and are resolved as soon as possible. When responding to complaints, the Academy aims to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial.
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response.
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality.
- Treat complainants with respect, ensuring that they receive proper consideration and a timely response.
- Enable a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary.
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process.
- Provide information to the Academy's senior management team so that services can be improved.

The Academy will try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed. The Academy will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, the Academy will ensure it publicises the existence of this policy and make it available on its website.

#### **4. Policy Statement**

The Academy needs to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. Parents and students should never feel - or be made to feel - that a complaint, made in a reasonable and appropriate way, will be taken amiss or will reflect adversely on the student or his/her opportunities at this Academy. The Academy will investigate and try to resolve every complaint in a positive manner and will treat every complaint as an opportunity to improve practice. Through this policy, the Academy aims to:

- Be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint.
- Give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible.
- Resolve any complaints through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, puts the interests of the child above all other issues.
- Put right any matter which may have gone wrong.
- Review systems and procedures in the light of the relevant circumstances.

The Academy recognises that a complaint which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, damaging to relationships and also to the Academy's internal culture.

#### **5. Principles for investigation**

When investigating a complaint, the Academy will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would put things right

The Academy aims to address complaints as quickly as possible and thus realistic and reasonable time limits will be set for each action within each stage. Where further investigations are necessary, new time limits will be set, and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation for the delay.

The Academy expects that complaints will be made as soon as possible after an incident arises and no later than 3 months afterwards. The Academy will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

## **6. Procedures**

### **Stage 1: Informal**

The Academy will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

The complainant should raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. The relevant member of staff could be a form teacher, Head of Department, Head of Year or Student Support Manager:

- If the concern relates to the classroom or the curriculum please speak or write to the Vice Principal (Curriculum).
- If the concern relates to matters outside the classroom, please speak or write to the relevant Head of Year.
- A concern or complaint relating to financial matters should be stated in writing to the Finance Manager.
- A parent who is dissatisfied with an aspect of the Academy's policies, procedures, management or administration may write to the Principal with details of the complaint. The Principal will investigate and will do his best to resolve the dispute. If the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may renew his complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors.

If the complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact the Principal's PA.

The Academy will acknowledge informal complaints within two (2) school days, and investigate and provide a response within five (5) school days. Should more time be required to investigate the complaint, the complainant will be contacted and given a revised timescale. The informal stage will involve a meeting or a telephone conversation between the complainant and member of staff dealing with the complaint.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, it can be put in writing, making clear whether the matter is to be dealt with as a complaint.

### **Stage 2: Formal complaint to the Academy**

The formal stage involves the complainant putting the complaint into writing, usually to the Principal and/or the subject of the complaint. This letter should provide details such as relevant dates, times and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents. The complainant should also state what they feel would resolve the complaint. The Principal (or other person appointed by the Principal for this purpose) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the complainant within ten (10) school days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to proceed to the next stage of this procedure, they should inform the clerk of governors in writing within five (5) school days.

### **Stage 3: Formal complaint to Chair of Governors**

In this stage, the complainant writes to or emails the Chair of Governors outlining why they are dissatisfied the Academy's response so far. The Chair of Governors or another nominated Governor will review the case and provide a written response to the complainant within ten (10) school days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to proceed to the next stage of this procedure, they should inform the clerk of governors in writing within five (5) school days if they wish to proceed to the next stage.

#### **Stage 4: Review Panel**

Complaints will be escalated to the panel hearing stage if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint at the third, formal, stage. The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of Academy Trust and must consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least 1 panel member must be independent of the management and running of the Academy. The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress. The review panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- recommend changes to the Academy's systems or procedures to ensure problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The complainant will have reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; however, the review panel reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the complainant. At the review panel meeting, the complainant and representatives from the Academy, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written submissions prior to the meeting.

The complainant will attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish. At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence. The panel, the complainant and the Academy's representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the complainant and Academy representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave and evidence will then be considered.

The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations. The panel will also provide a copy of the findings and recommendations to the complainant and, where relevant, the individual who is the subject of the complaint, and make a copy available for inspection by the proprietor and the Principal.

The Academy will inform those involved of the decision in writing within ten (10) school days.

Appendix 2 has more detailed information of the Review Panel process.

### **7. Complaints against the Principal or a Governor**

Complaints made against the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors. Where a complaint is against the Chair of Governors or any member of the Governing Board, it should be made in writing to the clerk to the Governing Board in the first instance.

A Governor will be nominated to lead an investigation and review the case. This nominated Governor will provide written feedback to the complainant within ten (10) school days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response and wishes to proceed to the next stage of this procedure, they should inform the clerk of governors in writing within five (5) school days. The next stage in this case will be a review panel as described in stage 4 of the complaints procedures.

### **8. Referring complaints on completion of the Academy's procedure**

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the Academy's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA will check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by the Academy. The ESFA will not overturn the Academy's decision about a complaint. However, it will look into:

- Whether there was undue delay, or the Academy did not comply with its own complaints procedure.
- Whether the Academy was in breach of its funding agreement with the Secretary of State.
- Whether the Academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation.

If the Academy did not deal with the complaint properly, it will be asked to re-investigate the complaint. If the Academy's complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the Academy will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly. For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

## **9. Complaints from MPs**

Written complaints from MPs will be addressed by the Principal who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three (3) school days and, following investigation will respond in writing within ten (10) school days.

## **10. Persistent complaints**

The Academy will do its best to be helpful to people making a complaint or concern or requesting information. However, in cases where the Academy is contacted repeatedly by an individual making the same points, or who asks the Academy to reconsider its position, the Academy will act appropriately.

Where a complainant tries to re-open the issue with the Academy after the complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and the Academy has done everything it reasonably can in response to the complaint, the Chair of Governors (or other appropriate person in the case of a complaint about the Chair) will inform the complainant that the matter is closed.

If the complainant subsequently contacts the Academy again about the same issue, the Academy can choose not to respond. The normal circumstance in which the Academy will not respond is if:

- the Academy has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs, and
- the complainant has been given a clear statement of the Academy's position and their options (if any), and
- the complainant is contacting the Academy repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time

However, this list is not intended to be exhaustive.

The Academy will be most likely to choose not to respond if:

- It has reason to believe the individual is contacting the Academy with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience, and/or
- the individual's letters/emails/telephone calls are often or always abusive or aggressive, and/or
- the individual makes insulting personal comments about, or threats towards, Academy staff.

Unreasonable behaviour which is abusive, offensive or threatening may constitute an unreasonably persistent complaint. Once the Academy has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing, either by letter or email. The Academy will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaints are heard, and that the Academy acts reasonably.

## 11. Unreasonable Complainants

The Academy is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. The Academy will not normally limit the contact complainants have with its staff. However, the Academy does not expect its staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The Academy defines unreasonable complainants as ‘those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Academy, hinder our consideration of their or other people’s complaints’. A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:

- 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 while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or 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 seeks to have 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 that complaint where the Academy’s 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, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with the Academy while a 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 Principal or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Principal will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact the Academy causing a significant level of disruption, the Academy may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

## **12. Barring from the Academy Premises**

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. The Academy will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for students, staff and other members of their community. If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, the Academy will ask him/her to leave the premises. In serious cases, the Principal can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on Academy premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make. The Academy will always give the parent the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing. The decision to bar should then be reviewed, taking into account any representations made by the parent and either confirmed or lifted. If the decision is confirmed the parent should be notified in writing, explaining how long the bar will be in place.

Anyone wishing to complain about being barred can do so, by letter or email, to the Principal or Chair of Governors. However, complaints about barring cannot be escalated to the Department for Education. Once the Academy's own complaints procedure has been completed, the only remaining avenue of appeal is through the Courts; independent legal advice must therefore be sought.

## **13. Record-keeping**

The Academy will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls. This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel. This is except where the Secretary of State (or someone acting on their behalf) or the complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection. Records of complaints will be kept for one (1) year after the students has left the Academy.

The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole Governing Board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point. Where the Governing Board is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the Academy will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the Governing Board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

## **14. Reviewing Procedures**

The Student Welfare Committee will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Principal where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there



are any improvements that the Academy can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

## **15. Monitoring arrangements**

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure in ensuring that complaints are handled properly. The Governing Body will appoint a Designated Officer to (Complaints Coordinator) to:

- Be responsible for investigating and resolving complaints.
- Be the first point of contact while the matter remains unresolved.
- Co-ordinate the complaint procedures in the Academy.
- Maintain an ongoing training programme for all Academy employees in relation to complaints.
- Monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to complaints.
- Report regularly to the Principal with respect to complaints.

The complaints records are logged and managed by the Principal's PA. The Principal will track the number and nature of complaints and review the complaints log and underlying issues as stated in section 14.

## **Appendix 1 – Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Complainant**

The complainant or person who makes the complaint will receive a more effective response to the complaint if he/she:

- co-operates with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint;
- expresses the complaint in full as early as possible;
- responds promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint;
- asks for assistance as needed;
- treats all those involved in the complaint with respect.

### **The Complaints Co-ordinator (or Principal)**

The Complaints Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;
- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure will be aware of the legislation around complaints including the Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- liaise with staff members, headteacher, Chair of Governors and Clerk to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure;
- keep records;
- be aware of issues regarding:
  - sharing third party information;
  - additional support - this may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support.

### **The Investigator**

The Investigator is the person involved in Stages 1 and 2 of the procedure. The Investigator's role can include:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:
  - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved;
  - consideration of records and other relevant information;
  - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint;
  - analysing information;
- effectively liaising with the complainant and the Complaints Co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- identifying solutions and recommending courses of action to resolve problems;
- being mindful of the timescales to respond; and
- responding to the complainant in plain and clear language.

The person investigating the complaint should make sure that they:

- 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 of the meeting.

### **The Panel Clerk (this could be Clerk to the Governors or the Complaints Coordinator)**

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant for the panel meeting and is expected to:

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;

- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing;
- record the proceedings;
- circulate the minutes of the panel hearing;
- notify all parties of the panel's decision;
- liaise with the complaints co-ordinator.

### **The Panel Chair**

The Panel Chair has a key role in ensuring that:

- the meeting is minuted;
- the remit of the panel is explained to the complainant and both they and the school have the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- the issues are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made;
- parents/carers and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease – this is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person;
- the hearing is conducted in an informal manner with everyone treated with respect and courtesy;
- the layout of the room will set the tone – care is needed to ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial;
- 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;
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to state their case and seek clarity;
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance – 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 hearing;
- liaise with the Clerk and complaints co-ordinator.

### **Panel Member**

Panellists will need to be aware that:

- It is important that the review panel hearing is independent and impartial, and that it is seen to be so; no governor may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- The aim of the hearing, which will be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant; however, it must be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.
- Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting; parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible.
- Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the hearing. Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated. The panel should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults. If the child/young person is the complainant, the panel should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the panel should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the hearing, if any, the child/young person

needs to attend. The parent should be advised however that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting which the panel considers not to be in the child/young person's best interests.

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

## **Appendix 2 – Panel Hearing Procedures**

Complainants must lodge their appeal in writing and within five (5) school days of the date of the Academy's decision in stage 2. The complainant should provide a list of their complaint(s) made against the Academy and which they believe to have been resolved unsatisfactorily, along with the remedies sought in respect of each. The Review Panel is only obliged to consider the complaint(s) lodged in this 'initial submission' although they may use their discretion to consider other relevant and related matters that may subsequently arise.

Where an appeal is received by the Academy, the Academy will, within five (5) school days, refer the matter to the Clerk to the Board of Governors, who will act as Clerk to the Review Panel. Where the appeal is received by the Academy during school holidays, or within two (2) school days of their commencement, the Academy has five (5) school days upon commencement of the school term to refer the matter to the Clerk to the Board of Governors.

The Clerk provides an independent source of advice on procedure for all parties.

Once an appeal has been received by the Clerk, he/she will acknowledge the appeal in writing within five (5) school days, and inform the complainant(s) of the steps involved in this procedure.

The Clerk will then endeavour to convene an independent Review Panel hearing as soon as possible to consider the matter, normally no later than twenty (20) school days after receipt by the Academy of complainants' written notice dependent upon the availability of the Panel members.

The following will be allowed to attend a hearing, to give statements and present their evidence and will also be given a chance to ask and reply to questions:

- (a) The complainant, who could be accompanied as appropriately;
- (b) The Principal of the Academy who could be accompanied where appropriate by other relevant colleagues; and
- (c) Any other interested person whom the Review Panel considers to have a reasonable and just interest in the process and whose contribution would assist the Panel in their decision-making.

Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

Where the Review Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. In such cases all parties will be given the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Panel in support of their position, including:

- (a) documents in support of complaint(s),
- (b) chronology and key dates relating to complaint(s), and
- (c) written submission setting out the complaint(s) in more detail.

This evidence will be considered by the Panel, along with the initial submission that was lodged by the complainant.

Evidence will be initially sent to the Clerk, who will then circulate the documentation to all parties, including the Panel members, along with an order of proceedings. All written evidence must be received by the Clerk no later than ten (10) working days in advance of the hearing. The Clerk will distribute the written evidence to the relevant parties no later than five (5) working days in advance of the Panel hearing.

It is for the Panel to decide how to conduct the proceedings of the appeal, which should be reasonably informal so that all parties can present their case effectively. If possible, the Panel

will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision, and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten (10) working days of the hearing. The decision reached by the Review Panel is final.

Any decision reached that may have financial implications for the Academy will need the appropriate approval from the relevant authorities e.g. the Board of Governors, although any such approval must be compatible with the decision of the Review Panel.

The Panel's findings will be sent by the Clerk in writing to the parents, the Principal, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. The letter will state any reasons for the decision reached and recommendations made by the Review Panel.

The Academy will keep a record of all appeals, decisions and recommendations of the Review Panel, which record will be kept for one (1) year after the student leaves the Academy.

Any correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Education Act requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails.