

# Complaints Policy and Procedure

Organisation:	Elevated Minds CIC
School:	Elevated Futures
Approved by:	Doreen Sinclair-McCollin, CEO
Date approved:	July 2025
Next review due:	July 2026

## Table of Contents

1. Statement of Intent
2. Legal Framework and Compliance
3. Aims and Principles
4. Scope of this Policy
5. The Complaints Procedure (Three Stages)
6. Complaints about the Headteacher or Proprietor
7. Record-Keeping and Confidentiality
8. Vexatious or Unreasonable Complaints
9. Policy Review

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## 1. Statement of Intent

Elevated Minds CIC, operating as **Elevated Futures Educational Provision**, is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers. We believe that open communication and restorative dialogue can resolve the vast majority of concerns.

We are committed to ensuring that all concerns and complaints are handled with fairness, transparency, and in a timely manner. We do not view complaints as a negative, but as a valuable opportunity to listen, reflect, and improve our provision for all pupils. This policy is designed to be clear, fair, and accessible.

## 2. Legal Framework and Compliance

This policy complies with **Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**.

The standard requires the proprietor to ensure a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented, which provides for:

- (a) A written procedure available to parents.
- (b) A three-stage process: Informal, Formal, and a Panel Hearing.
- (c) The panel at Stage 3 includes at least one person independent of the school.
- (d) A written record of complaints and their outcomes.
- (e) Stated timelines for resolution and confidentiality.

## 3. Aims and Principles

- **Provide** a clear, fair, and structured process for resolving complaints.
- **Encourage** the resolution of concerns at the earliest possible stage through **restorative dialogue**.
- **Ensure** all concerns are handled sensitively, confidentially, and effectively.
- **Record and learn** from complaints to drive continuous improvement in the quality of our provision.
- **Uphold** the principles of natural justice and transparency for all parties involved.

## 4. Scope of this Policy

This policy covers complaints made by parents or carers of registered pupils at Elevated Futures Educational Provision.

This procedure does **not** cover:

- **Safeguarding Concerns:** Any concern about a child's safety or wellbeing will be immediately referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and handled via our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- **Exclusions:** These are subject to a separate statutory appeals process.

- **Staff Grievances or Public Complaints:** These are handled by separate internal procedures.

## 5. The Complaints Procedure (Three Stages)

### Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

We strongly believe that most concerns can and should be resolved at this stage. We encourage parents to:

1. Raise the concern directly with the relevant member of staff (e.g., the pupil's teacher, key worker, or SENCo).
2. The staff member will listen and engage in a restorative dialogue, aiming to understand the issue and find a mutually agreeable solution.
3. We aim to resolve all informal concerns within **five school days**.
4. If the concern is about a staff member, it should be raised with the Headteacher.

If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome, or if the concern is of a very serious nature, they may initiate Stage 2.

### Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Headteacher

1. The complaint must be submitted in writing (email is acceptable) to the Headteacher.
2. The Headteacher (or a delegated senior leader) will acknowledge receipt in writing within **two school days**.
3. The Headteacher will conduct a full investigation into the complaint. This may involve interviewing pupils, staff, and reviewing all relevant records.
4. A full written response, detailing the investigation's findings and any action taken, will be sent to the parent within **fifteen school days** of receiving the complaint.

If the parent remains dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they may proceed to Stage 3.

### Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

1. The parent must request a Panel Hearing in writing to the Proprietor (Elevated Minds CIC) within **ten school days** of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.
2. A hearing will be arranged to take place within **twenty school days** of the request.

3. The Panel will consist of **at least three people** who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
4. **One Panel member will be independent** of the management and running of the school (as required by law).
5. The parent may attend the hearing and may be accompanied by a friend or relative.
6. The Panel will review all evidence and hear from both the parent and the school.
7. A written record of the Panel's findings and any recommendations will be provided to the parent, the Headteacher, and the Proprietor within **seven school days** of the hearing.

## 6. Complaints about the Headteacher or Proprietor

- A complaint about the **Headteacher** should be made in writing and addressed to the Proprietor (Elevated Minds CIC), who will investigate at Stage 2.
- A complaint about the **Proprietor** should also be made in writing. The Proprietor will arrange for an independent investigation at Stage 2.

## 7. Record-Keeping and Confidentiality

- A written record will be kept of all formal complaints (Stage 2 and 3).
- This record will include the nature of the complaint, the steps taken, the outcome, and any actions taken.
- Records are held securely, confidentially, and are available for inspection by Ofsted/ISI.
- All correspondence, statements, and records will be kept confidential, except where disclosure is legally required.

## 8. Vexatious or Unreasonable Complaints

Elevated Futures is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly. However, in a very small number of cases, complaints can be vexatious, unreasonable, or harassing.

We define such complaints as those that are obsessive, designed to cause disruption, or that are being pursued in an unreasonable manner (e.g., using abusive language, refusing to accept the policy's outcome after all stages are exhausted).

The school reserves the right to close a complaint and cease correspondence if it is deemed vexatious. This decision will only be taken by the Headteacher or Proprietor.

## 9. Policy Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually by the SLT and Proprietor and updated in response to legislative changes or to learn from complaints received.

### Approval Sign-Off

Name	Position	Signature	Date
D. Sinclair-McCollin	Head Teacher Director		28 July 2025