ULMaS Complaints Policy

Status: STATUTORY, to be reviewed 2 years by the Board of Trustees

Delegated to: Board of Trustees

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PROCEDURES

A complaint made to the school should follow the staged process that is detailed below. The complaints procedure and policy of University of Liverpool Maths School's has 4 stages. These procedures are intended to apply to students of the school, their parents or carers, or anyone else who needs to express a concern about the school, its policies or the conduct of its staff or trustees.

This procedure is relevant for complaints about the curriculum and exclusions, but excludes complaints for which other policies exist including Sexual Health and Relationships Education, Safeguarding (Child Protection), Admissions, Special Educational Needs and Staff Grievances

In accordance with equality law, we will make reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Stage 1 Informal

Initially, a concern should be raised informally with a staff member.
As soon as you have a concern, contact the relevant member of staff (if known) to clarify the issue, request additional information and, if appropriate, an appointment to talk (in person or on the telephone) to a member of staff or, if you prefer, with their line manager.
Difficulties can often be sorted out very quickly in this way.
If you are unsure about who to contact, the first point of contact is school reception via reception@livmathsschool.org. You will then be put in contact with the best person to address your concern.
On some occasions, you may not wish to contact the member of staff directly.
At these times, please contact the Assistant Headteacher via school reception on the address given above, or (if your complaint concerns school reception itself) david.hemsley@livmathsschool.org.
To help us to prepare for your meeting or telephone conversation please let the school know what your meeting is about when you book the appointment and you may also find it helpful to review the school's website for school procedure and policy documents on the issues you want to discuss.
It is hoped you can reach an understanding that satisfies both you and the school through an early informal conversation. However, if you are not now satisfied that your complaint has been dealt with fully you should proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 Formal

Stage 2 of the formal complaint process is heard by an appropriate member of staff.
All formal complaints must be put in writing using the school's online complaints form
The complaint will be logged and forwarded to the school's Leadership Team and you will receive a copy of the information you have recorded. A member of the school's Leadership

Team will acknowledge receipt of the written formal complaint, normally within 2 school working days.
In some cases this response may be able to successfully address your concerns. However, a meeting will normally be needed to discuss the matter further. This meeting will occur at the earliest mutually convenient opportunity and normally within 10 school working days.
The aim is to reach a satisfactory resolution as speedily as possible.
If you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 2, you may proceed to Stage 3

Stage 3 Formal: Headteacher

Stage 3 of the formal complaint process is heard by the Headteacher.
This Stage 3 can only happen if you have been previously through Stage 1 and 2, however we do recognise that some complaints may need to go straight to the Headteacher because of the nature or seriousness of the complaint.

Within 10 school working days you will need to tell the school in writing why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the school to do. You should do this by emailing the Headteacher using headteacher@livmathsschool.org.
If the complaint is deemed not to be of a nature that the Headteacher should be dealing with initially and you did not previously utilise Stage 1 and Stage 2, the Headteacher will liaise with the most appropriate member of staff and the Headteacher's PA will organise a meeting.
If stage 1 and stage 2 have already been observed, or are deemed to be inappropriate, the Headteacher's PA will arrange an appointment for you to meet with the Headmaster, who will then investigate the complaint.
The Headteacher will respond in writing within 5 school working days of your meeting, setting out the response. It is hoped that the decision will satisfy all parties.
It is important to be aware that if a complaint results in Disciplinary Action for a member of staff at the school, it is not always appropriate for a complainant to be aware of the details of this action.
Disciplinary Action using the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and Policy document can take an extended period of time, as it is essential to follow the appropriate Employment Legislation.
If after this Stage 3 you still feel the matter is unresolved or you cannot accept the action taken by the school, you can then proceed to Stage 4.

Stage 4 Formal: Trustees

A formal complaint is heard by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Trustees or another suitable trustee if these people are involved in the issue being complained about.
This Stage 4 can only happen if you have been previously through Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3.
Within 10 school working days of getting the Headmaster's decision at Stage 3, you should write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees via reception@livmathsschool.org or University of Liverpool Maths School, Sir Alastair Pilkington Building, Back Bedford Street, Liverpool L69 1LZ, explaining why you remain unhappy with the school's actions.
The responsible person will then convene a panel who will familiarise themselves with the details of the complaint.

Members of the panel
The panel will allow the complainant to attend the hearing and be accompanied if they wish.

The panel will consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
At least one member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the academy. They will be identified by the person charged with assembling the panel and will not be a member of school staff or a Trustee or Member of the Trust. They will need to have significant experience of school governance.

The formal hearing in the presence of this panel will normally occur no more than 15 school working days from the receipt of the written request for Stage 4 investigation.
The panel will make findings and recommendations in order that the trust can learn from the complaint and the panel's investigations and discussions. A copy of the outcome information provided to the complainant and, if relevant, the person complained about. The outcome information will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor (The Board of Trustees and the Members of the Trust) and the head teacher and will be provided to the Secretary of State on request. The Board of Trustees will be provided with a copy of the panel's findings and recommendations at their next meeting. If the complaint concerns the behaviour of the Board of Trustees or members of it then this information should also be brought to the attention of the Members of The Trust.

The conclusion of the procedure

The aim Stage 4 is to resolve the complaint impartially and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the decision in writing normally within 3 school working days after the date of the Hearing. The Trustees' Hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

If you are still not satisfied you should refer to the Whistleblowing Policy at https://liverpoolmathsschool.org/policies/ for information about further avenues to resolve your concern.

You may also find the following website useful:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy

Record keeping

The school will maintain a written record of all formal complaints, including:

- Whether they were resolved at stage 2 or progressed to a stage 3 panel hearing; and
- What action was taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether the complaints were upheld)

In line with the school's data protection policy, the school will maintain confidentiality in the complaints process. We will keep the following documents related to individual complaints confidential:

- Correspondence
- Statements

- Records

However, we may be obliged to share these documents if we are asked to do so by the Secretary of State for Education or someone acting on their behalf.

Vexatious or threatening complaints

Where we receive complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, or repetitious and have already correctly applied our complaints procedure we reserve the right to choose not to engage with the complainant.

Where complaints are abusive or threatening we reserve the right to refer them to the police and to cease correspondence with the complainant and to take the necessary measures to protect members of staff and trustees.

Anonymous Complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head teacher or Chair of Trustees, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.