

Compass Learning & Education

Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy



1. Policy Statement

Compass Learning & Education is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and high-quality educational provision for all learners. We value feedback and view comments, compliments and complaints as an important opportunity to improve our services, strengthen relationships and uphold accountability.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Concerns are taken seriously and addressed promptly.
- Complaints are handled fairly, transparently and consistently.
- Children and young people are supported to express their views.
- No individual is disadvantaged for raising a concern.
- Feedback informs ongoing improvement.

This policy applies to:

- Learners (KS3, KS4 and Post-16)
- Parents/carers
- Commissioning schools and local authorities
- Staff and volunteers
- Members of the public

2. Principles

Our approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Accessibility** – Everyone knows how to raise a concern.
- **Child-centred practice** – Learners are supported to voice concerns safely.
- **Timeliness** – Clear response times are set and adhered to.
- **Confidentiality** – Information is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- **Safeguarding first** – Any safeguarding concern is dealt with immediately under the Safeguarding Policy.
- **Fairness and natural justice** – All parties are heard.

3. Comments and Compliments

We actively encourage positive feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Comments and compliments can be made:

- Verbally to staff
- By email to the Head of Provision
- In writing
- Via commissioner feedback forms (where applicable)

All compliments will be recorded and shared with relevant staff. Suggestions for improvement will be reviewed as part of quality assurance and development planning.

4. What is a Complaint?

A complaint is defined as:

An expression of dissatisfaction about the provision, actions, decisions or behaviour of staff or representatives of Compass Learning & Education.

This does not include:

- Safeguarding disclosures (these follow safeguarding procedures)
- Staff grievances (covered by the Staff Grievance Policy)
- Allegations against staff (covered by Safeguarding/Managing Allegations Policy)
- Appeals relating to EHCP decisions (these follow statutory SEND routes)

5. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints can be made:

- **In person**
- **By telephone**
- **By email**
- **In writing**

Contact details are clearly displayed in:

- The Prospectus
- Parent/Carer Handbook
- Website (when live)
- Induction information

If a learner wishes to complain:

- They may speak to a trusted member of staff.

- They may request to speak to the DSL or Head of Provision.
- A staff member will support them to record the complaint if needed.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for individuals with SEND, literacy needs or language barriers.

6. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion.

- The concern should be raised with the relevant staff member or Head of Provision.
- We will acknowledge the concern within **2 working days**.
- We aim to resolve informal complaints within **5 working days**.

If the matter is resolved, a brief record will be kept.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the issue is not resolved informally, a formal complaint may be made in writing to the Head of Provision.

The complaint should include:

- What happened
- Who was involved
- When it occurred
- What outcome is sought

We will:

- Acknowledge receipt within **2 working days**
- Investigate fully and fairly
- Provide a written response within **10 working days**

If more time is required (for example, due to complexity or staff absence), the complainant will be informed.

Stage 3 – Review / Escalation

If the complainant remains dissatisfied:

- They may request a review within **10 working days** of receiving the outcome.
- The review will be conducted by the Proprietor (or an independent person where appropriate).

- A final written response will be issued within **15 working days**.

This decision is final within the organisation.

7. Complaints from Learners

We recognise that learners may:

- Feel anxious about complaining.
- Fear negative consequences.
- Require support to articulate concerns.

Therefore:

- Learners will be reminded regularly that it is safe to speak up.
- Support from a trusted adult will be offered.
- Complaints can be made verbally.
- No learner will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern.

8. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint raises a safeguarding concern:

- It will immediately be referred to the DSL.
- Safeguarding procedures will take priority.
- External agencies may be informed where required.

Safeguarding concerns are not dealt with solely under this complaints process.

9. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered, particularly where safeguarding or serious misconduct is alleged. However, investigation may be limited where insufficient information is provided.

10. Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints

Where a complainant:

- Repeatedly raises the same issue after resolution
- Uses threatening or abusive language
- Makes deliberately false allegations

The provision reserves the right to:

- Restrict contact
- Require communication in writing only
- Decline to reopen matters already concluded

This will be handled proportionately and fairly.

11. Recording and Monitoring

A confidential Complaints Log will record:

- Date received
- Nature of complaint
- Stage of process
- Outcome
- Actions taken
- Lessons learned

Complaints data will be reviewed termly to:

- Identify patterns or trends
- Inform staff training
- Improve provision quality

Commissioners may receive summary data where appropriate.

12. Timescales Summary

Stage Acknowledgement Response Time

Informal	2 working days	5 working days
Formal	2 working days	10 working days
Review	2 working days	15 working days

13. External Escalation

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage 3, they may:

- Contact the commissioning school or local authority.
- Seek advice from mediation services.
- Raise concerns with relevant regulatory or oversight bodies where appropriate.

Where the complaint concerns safeguarding, the complainant may contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

14. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in line with:

- Data Protection legislation
- The Safeguarding Policy
- Record Keeping procedures

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Guidance is updated
- Learning from complaints indicates revision is required

Appendix A – Complaints Flowchart (One Page Summary)

1. Raise concern informally →
2. Acknowledge within 2 days →
3. Attempt resolution (5 days) →
4. Submit formal complaint in writing →
5. Investigation (10 days) →
6. Written outcome →
7. Request review (within 10 days) →
8. Final response (15 days)