

Learner and Parent Complaints Policy

Date Ratified: 11 February 2025

Date Policy due to be reviewed: February 2027

Committee Responsible for policy: Board of Governance

Geraldine Kelly – Chair of the Board of Governors

Review No.	Date	Summary of Changes	Reviewer
1.			
2.			
3.			

Ethos

We strive to provide a good education for all our learners. The staff strive to build positive relationships with all learners/parents/carers and stakeholders. The college is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints. The following policy sets out the procedures that the college follows in such cases.

Introduction

1.1 If any parent/carer or stakeholder is unhappy with the education that their young person is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the college, we encourage them to talk to the college immediately.

1.2 We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the Local Authority. If the college itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer to the matter to the LA.

1.3 All parents/carers have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The college aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with a complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases where it includes a young person, we put the interests of the young person above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The Complaints Process

A complaint can be made verbally or in writing and can be made against a learner, a member of staff, a governor or a college stakeholder.

All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with the college's complaints procedure.

3.1 If a parent/carer or stakeholder is concerned about anything to do with the progress or well-being of a learner at the college, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with Head of College mel@theridgecollege.co.uk. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All staff strive to ensure that each learner is happy at college, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so the college can take action before it seriously affects the young person's progress.

3.2 The SLT/governors consider any complaints from any source very seriously, and investigate each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage with the involvement of the SLT following a meeting of all parties. Depending on the severity of the complaint it may be deemed necessary to implement a suspension while the matter is investigated. This will require the

authorisation of a governor and could be sanctioned for 1 to 3 days. If the parent/carer or stakeholder is not satisfied by the outcome of the investigation and decides to make an appeal this may be requested in writing within 14 days of the initial outcome being confirmed.

3.3 The appeal will consist of an independent review of the complaint by 2 further members of the board. The appeal will be conducted and the learners, parents/ carers, staff or stakeholders will be invited to a meeting to discuss the case. Where necessary the board may consult with the LA if the learner's continued placement at the college is at risk. In the event that the original decision is upheld and the learner is dismissed from college due to the severity of the complaint, the college will call an urgent Statutory Review of the learner EHCP and advise the LA that the Ridge College is no longer a suitable placement.

3.4 Should any parent/carer or college stakeholder have a complaint about any of the Ridge staff, they should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the Board of Governors, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the college, but if parent/carer or stakeholder is unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

3.5 Only if the informal complaint fails to be resolved should the matter be made into a formal complaint to be dealt with by the Board of Governors. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the college has handled it so far. The parent/carer or stakeholder should send this written complaint to the Board of Governors.

3.6 The Board of Governors must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and will invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that he/she can explain the complaint in more detail. The college gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

3.7 After hearing all the evidence, the governors will consider their decision and inform the parent/carer or stakeholder about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to everyone's satisfaction.

3.8 If the complaint is not resolved, a parent/carer/stakeholder may make representation to the LA by writing to the Governor of Children & Young People's Service at the council house (further information about this process is available from the LA). A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

3.9 If any parent/carer is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then he/she is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

4 Monitoring and Review

4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure all complaints are handled properly. The College Curriculum Manager logs all

complaints received by the college, and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents/carers and stakeholders so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

4.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

4.4 Further advice on complaint handling can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures/best-practice-advice-for-school-complaints-procedures-2019