

**Safe Start Complaint Procedure Policy**

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Reviewed by: Rachel Duffy

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**SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

At Safestart, we are committed to providing high quality services for all our school community, taking account of users’ views and using the findings to promote and develop capacity for sustainable improvement.

This document details the complaints procedure. A complainant may be a learner, prospective learner, parent/carer, employer or any other interested party that indicates dissatisfaction with the current level of service.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Overall responsibility for this procedure lies with the Head Teacher whilst day-to-day responsibility for implementation of this procedure lies with all staff.

All staff have a responsibility to try to resolve informal complaints prior to invoking the Complaints Procedure.

All staff have a responsibility to forward formal complaints to the Head teacher.

**MAKING A COMPLAINT**

Formal complaints can be made in the following ways:

* By telephone – 01615235444
* By Email – admin@safestartschooltameside.com
* In writing – by completing the Complaints Form, which is available from the Safestart Internet and the school.
* This document can be made available in alternative formats such as large print/braille. Magnification equipment is also available.

**POLICY**

SafeStart :

* Will investigate complaints thoroughly and objectively and they will be regularly monitored by the Head Teacher.
* Aims to reach an outcome / decision within twenty working days – however, some complaints, especially if the issue is more difficult to resolve, may take longer.
* Will contact the complainant to advise if the investigation is likely to take more than twenty working days and will keep them informed of our progress by their preferred method of contact.
* Aims to have communicated the outcomes/decisions to the complainant within twenty working days.
* Will ensure that learners will not be treated less favourably following their complaint. If this is found to be the case, staff disciplinary procedures will be followed.
* Will identify actions from complaints, comments and compliments received to improve and develop our services.

**PROCEDURE**

**Learners:**

If a learner has a concern, it should initially be raised with their tutor, or an alternative member of staff if that is not appropriate. The member of staff must take every opportunity to resolve the complaint informally. If an informal resolution is not possible, a Complaints Form should be completed by the learner (with assistance of a member of staff if required) and sent to the Head teacher.

If the complaint is communicated by telephone or email the member of staff can record the details on behalf of the complainant and send it to the Head teacher.

Parents/ carers will be informed and kept updated where appropriate if it does not put them at risk.

External complainants can contact the School directly using the contact details above.

As part of our drive to improve our services for our students, we will ask for Equality and Diversity Information for example; gender, age, ethnicity etc. these details help us to make sure that all people are treated fairly.

Complaints Form should be completed with as much detail as possible but most importantly should include:

* full name
* date of birth
* contact details.

**ALL** formal complaints **must** be sent to the Head Teacher to record.

On receipt of a formal complaint by the Administration Department, an Investigation Lead will be allocated within five working days of receipt. This will then trigger the 20 day cycle.

The Head teacher will then appoint an Investigation Lead to investigate the issues raised. The Investigation Lead will be provided with details so that they have all of the information required to undertake the investigation. The Administration Department will continuously monitor and track the complaint, comment or compliment until the issue has been resolved.

Following the investigation, the outcomes/decision will be communicated to the complainant, by their preferred method of contact.

If the issues have been resolved the complaint will be closed on the Complaint System.

Compliments, Comments or Complaints should be raised within twelve months of the original issue so that evidence is available for the investigation. Any Compliment, Comment or Complaint received after this period will not be investigated.

All complaints will be looked into and investigated but this could be limited for anonymous complaints, depending on the amount of information provided or available.

Learners should be aware that malicious complaints received in any form will result in disciplinary action (i.e. complaints that are not true, use of foul language in any communication that are sent to staff).

All complainants should be aware that school staff have the right to work in a pleasant and safe environment and any violent or abusive behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated.

A Complaints Analysis will be produced annually and reviewed on a regular basis concerning the nature of the complaints received for improvement purposes.

The complaints procedure will be made available to parents/carers of pupils on the school website.

Where a parent/carer is not satisfied with the response to the complaint they may follow the formal procedure for the complaint in writing. Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made SafeStart will make provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school and allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish. The panel are to make findings and recommendations and a copy of those findings and recommendations is to be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. The findings and recommendations are to be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher.

A written record to be kept of all complaints that are made whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing. Action is to be taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

**COMPLAINTS APPEAL PROCESS**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, they may appeal against the decision within ten working days of our response.

The appeal will be investigated by a manager independent of the original complaint and the above timescales will apply. The outcome of this appeal concludes the complaints process.

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

All complaints will be treated fairly and within the directives of the school Equality policy. All complainants will be treated with respect and fairness throughout any investigations and processes linked to a complaint made.

**LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Complaints Policy is linked to:

* Behaviour Disciplinary Policy
* Safeguarding policy
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
* Whistleblowing Policy

The policy is cross referenced to the above policies and any complaint that falls within the processes of another policy will be handled under the appropriate policy but formally logged as a complaint.

**LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY**

* School website