

Complaints Procedure for Illuminate You, Learning for Life Lodge

Policy Name: Complaints Procedure

School Name: Illuminate You, Learning for Life Lodge

Policy review Date: 09.11.2025

Policy Lead: Headteacher

Approved by: Committee

1. Introduction

At **Illuminate You, Learning for Life Lodge**, we are committed to fostering an open, transparent, and supportive environment where concerns and complaints are addressed fairly and efficiently. We value feedback from students, parents, staff, and the wider school community as it helps us continually improve the quality of education and care we provide.

This **Complaints Procedure** is in compliance with the **Independent School Standards** and relevant legislation, including **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, **The Equality Act 2010**, and **The Children and Families Act 2014**. It provides a clear framework for managing and resolving complaints in a timely and respectful manner.

2. Legal Framework

This procedure is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

1. [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) (Part 7: Manner in which complaints are handled)
2. [The Equality Act 2010](#)
3. [The Children and Families Act 2014](#)
4. [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#)

3. Aims of the Complaints Procedure

The aims of this procedure are to:

- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely, respectful, and efficient manner.
- Provide a clear and accessible process for raising concerns and complaints.
- Encourage open communication between the school and parents or other complainants.
- Ensure that complaints are investigated thoroughly and that outcomes are communicated effectively.
- Comply with the **Independent School Standards** and legal requirements, ensuring transparency and accountability in all aspects of school operations.

4. Definition of a Complaint

A **complaint** is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about a service or action taken by the school or a member of staff that requires a formal response. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Concerns about the quality of education or care provided.
- Concerns regarding staff conduct or behaviour.
- Issues relating to safeguarding, health, and safety.
- Concerns about school policies, including behaviour or disciplinary actions.

Complaints should be differentiated from **concerns**, which can often be addressed informally without the need for a formal procedure.

5. Stages of the Complaints Procedure

5.1. Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

We believe that most complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. Complainants are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the relevant member of staff, or the Headteacher if necessary.

- **Process:** The complainant should contact the relevant member of staff or Headteacher to discuss the issue. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter

informally through discussions, meetings, or a clarification of the school's policies or actions.

- **Timeframe:** Informal complaints will be addressed within 5 working days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process, they may proceed to Stage 2.

Please email the [headteacher](#)

5.2. Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it should be submitted in writing as a formal complaint. The written complaint should be addressed to the Headteacher, or, if the complaint is about the Headteacher, to the chair of the committee.

Please email the [Chair of committee](#)

- **Process:** The complaint should include a clear description of the issue, any supporting documentation, and the outcome the complainant seeks. The Headteacher (or Chair of committee) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days and will initiate an investigation.
- **Investigation:** The investigation may involve meetings with the complainant, interviews with relevant staff, and review of any documentation or evidence. The Headteacher or Chair of committee will make every effort to resolve the matter.
- **Outcome:** A written response outlining the findings and resolution will be provided within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. If additional time is required, the complainant will be informed of the revised timeline.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they may proceed to Stage 3.

5.3. Stage 3 – Review by a Complaints Panel

If the issue remains unresolved after Stage 2, the complainant can request that the matter be reviewed by a formal **Complaints Panel**. This request must be submitted in writing to the Chair of committee.

- **Process:** The Complaints Panel will be convened within 15 working days of receiving the request. The panel will consist of at least three people, including one person who is independent of the management and running of the school.
- **Hearing:** The complainant will be invited to attend the hearing to present their case, and the school will also present its findings. The panel will review the evidence, including any relevant documentation or witness statements.

- **Outcome:** The panel will provide a written decision, outlining their findings and any actions to be taken, within 10 working days of the hearing. This decision is final and binding.

6. Record Keeping

The school will maintain a **complaints log** that records all formal complaints received, the actions taken, and the outcome. This log will be reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of committee to ensure that trends or recurring issues are identified and addressed.

All correspondence, meetings, and interviews relating to a complaint will be documented, and these records will be kept confidential, except where disclosure is required by law or requested by a regulatory body such as Ofsted or the Department for Education.

7. Safeguarding Concerns

If a complaint raises concerns about the safety or welfare of a child, it will be handled in accordance with the school's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**. In such cases, the school may be required to refer the matter to external agencies, such as social services or the police, in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**.

8. Equality and Inclusion

In line with the **Equality Act 2010**, the school is committed to ensuring that this complaints procedure is accessible to all members of the community. Reasonable adjustments will be made, where necessary, to support complainants with disabilities or other needs in accessing the process.

9. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this Complaints Procedure will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of committee. Feedback from complainants and staff will be considered to ensure that the procedure remains clear, accessible, and effective.

10. External Complaints

If, after completing the school's complaints procedure, the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to escalate their complaint to an external authority, such as **Ofsted** or the LA.

Lincolnshire County Council – Schools Team

For advice, guidance, or escalation regarding concerns about a child's education placement or provision, you can contact:

Lincolnshire County Council – Education Team

Email: schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Telephone: **01522 782030**

Website: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education

Address:

Children's Services Directorate

Lincolnshire County Council

County Offices, Newland

Lincoln LN1 1YL

Ofsted – Independent Schools Complaints

If you have a concern that the school is not meeting the **Independent School Standards** or is failing to safeguard pupils appropriately, you may contact **Ofsted** directly.

Ofsted

Ofsted

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Telephone: **0300 123 1231**

Website: www.gov.uk/ofsted

Postal address:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Important Note

Complaints to Ofsted should relate to the school's compliance with the **Independent School Standards**, including safeguarding, welfare, or quality of education. Ofsted does not investigate individual disputes between parents and schools but will consider whether the school is meeting its regulatory duties.

11. Conclusion

At **Illuminate You, Learning for Life Lodge**, we are committed to handling complaints promptly, fairly, and with respect. We believe that open communication and transparent processes are essential in maintaining the trust of our school community and ensuring that every concern is addressed in a manner that promotes positive outcomes for all.

This Complaints Procedure ensures that Illuminate You, Learning for Life Lodge complies with the Independent School Standards and provides a clear and effective process for managing and resolving complaints, supporting the continuous improvement of the school's operations and services.

Illuminate You, Lifelong Learning Lodge

Formal Complaint Letter Template

To:

The Headteacher / Proprietor
Illuminate You, Lifelong Learning Lodge
George Henderson Lodge, Morton, Gainsborough
Email: [insert school email address]
Telephone: [insert school phone number]

Formal Complaint Submission

Name of Complainant: _____

Relationship to Pupil (e.g., parent, carer, social worker):

Pupil's Name (if applicable): _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Email / Contact Number: _____

Nature of Complaint

Please describe your complaint clearly and concisely. Include dates, names of any staff or pupils involved, and relevant details of any previous discussions or attempts to resolve the matter informally.

Steps Taken So Far

Have you already raised this concern with a member of staff or the Headteacher?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please give details of when and to whom the issue was reported, and any response you received:

Desired Outcome

Please outline what outcome or resolution you are seeking:

Signature

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

Complaint Reference Number: _____

Stage: ☐ Stage 1 ☐ Stage 2 ☐ Stage 3 (Panel)

Response Due By: _____

Resolved / Escalated On: _____

Notes for Complainants

- You will receive written acknowledgment of your complaint within **5 working days**.
- A full investigation and written response will be provided within **20 working days**, in line with our Complaints Policy.
- If you remain dissatisfied after the school's process is complete, you may contact **Ofsted** or **Lincolnshire County Council Schools Team**

