



# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES POLICY

Seaside Learning Ltd

May 2024

## Statement of intent

Seaside Learning Ltd. aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to ensuring all complaints are managed sympathetically and efficiently.

Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether formally or informally, and the appropriate procedures will be implemented. This policy has been created to deal with any complaint against a teacher and/or the Director of Seaside Learning Ltd., James Lumber.

James Lumber will ensure the complaints procedure is:

- Easily accessible and publicised on the school's website.
- Simple to understand and put into practice.
- Impartial and fair to all parties involved.
- Respectful of confidentiality duties.
- Continuously under improvement, using information gathered during the procedure.
- Fairly investigated, by an independent person when necessary.
- Used to address all issues to provide appropriate and effective responses where necessary.

If the Complaint is against James Lumber, he will advise the complainant to contact the LADO.

**BCP** LADO on 01202 817600 or email [LADO@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Referral form to BCP LADO Service:

<https://www.bcpcouncil.gov.uk/documents/children-young-people-and-families/LADO-Referral-Form.pdf>

**Dorset** Duty Service ChAD on 01305 228866 or email [eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Skills Act 2008
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- A **“complaint”** can be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction’ towards the actions taken or a perceived lack of action taken.
- A **“concern”** can be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt’ where reassurance is required; concerns will be classed and addressed as complaints.
- **“Complainants”** are those who have raised a concern or a complaint.
- A **“grievance”** is an issue raised by a member of staff where they feel the school has not implemented a policy or process fairly or properly. Grievances will be dealt with in line with the school’s Grievance Policy.
- **“Days”** relate to school days.

## 3. Eligibility to make a complaint

Parents of students currently being educated by Seaside Learning Ltd. are able to make a complaint in line with this policy.

All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Parents/carers will be assured that their children will not be penalised if they raise a complaint.

This policy does not cover complaints made by the following:

- Parents/carers of pupils who are no longer educated by Seaside Learning
- Students

## 4. Timescales

Complaints are expected to be made as soon as possible after an issue arises to ensure the issue is addressed in an appropriate timescale.

Seaside Learning Ltd. upholds a three-month time limit in which a complaint can be lodged following an incident. Complaints made outside this time limit will not be automatically refused and exceptions will be considered.

Timescales for managing complaints at specific stages are outlined in the relevant sections of this policy. In the case of any timescales changing, all parties involved will be informed of the changes in a timely manner.

## **5. Informal raising of a concern**

Seaside Learning Ltd. will endeavour to resolve most concerns informally.

Unless the concern is about James Lumber, all concerns will be raised with him as Director of Seaside Learning Ltd.

A complaint may be made in person, by telephone or in writing. A written record will be kept of all concerns and the date on which they were received. A concern provided in writing will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within two days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during school holidays.

If the concern is not resolved within five days or, in the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their concern, the complainant will be advised to proceed in accordance with the 'Formal complaint' stage of this procedure.

## **6. Formal complaint**

The complainant should submit their complaint in writing to James Lumber. The complaint will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within two days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during school holidays, indicating that action is being taken and the likely timescales.

James Lumber will meet with the complainant within five days of acknowledging receipt of the complaint to discuss the matter.

During the meeting, James Lumber will attempt to reach a resolution; however, it may be necessary for further investigations to be carried out by him.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and other communications held in relation to the complaint.

Once all facts are established, James Lumber will inform the complainant of their decision and their reasoning in writing.

The complainant will be informed of the decision within 10 days from the receipt of the complaint. Where there are exceptional circumstances resulting in a delay, the complainant will be notified of this and informed of the new timescales as soon as possible.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome suggested, they will be advised to proceed to the 'Panel hearing' stage of this procedure.

## **7. Recording complaints**

A written record will be kept of any complaint made, detailing:

- Whether the complaint was resolved following an informal route, formal route or panel hearing.
- Actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

Additional records may be kept containing the following information:

- The date the issue was raised
- The name of the complainant and, where relevant, their child
- A description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations
- Witness statements
- The name of the staff member responsible for handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of correspondence on the issue

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests to access them.

## **8. Monitoring and review**

This policy was reviewed on **23.02.2024** by James Lumber - Director of Seaside Learning Ltd

This policy will be reviewed annually.

All changes made to this policy will be communicated with all relevant stakeholders.

