COMPLAINTS

POLICY



THE BISHOP FRASER TRUST
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Complaints Policy

Policy type	Trust Mandatory Enables parents or carers to come forward with concerns and facilitates the resolution of issues.
Author Owner	Tuesday Humby Chief People Officer
Approved by	Trustees 19th October 2026
Review date	Every two years, and earlier where required by legislative or regulatory change, significant incident learning, audit findings, changes to national guidance or identified operational need
Description of Changes	New Section 1 'Talking to us first' added. The Complainant's list of roles and responsibilities at Section 5 has been expanded. The contact for complaints at 5.3 has been changed from 'the Head's PA or nominated individual' to the Trust's Governance Manager. 6.3 'we will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved' removed. This was due to the vagueness of 'valid reasons' which it was felt could not be specific enough to rely upon. Sections 7('other matters affecting how we handle complaints'), 8 ('resolving complaints') and 9 ('withdrawal of complaints') added. 11.9 added to explain that the decision of the Review Panel is final. Section 13 (unreasonable behaviour by Complainants) added.

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1 Talking to us First

1.1 If something at school is worrying you, we want to hear about it. We understand that speaking up can feel difficult, and we are committed to listening, acting fairly, and resolving matters at the earliest possible stage.

1.2 A concern is a worry that you would like the school to look into. A complaint is raised when a concern has not been resolved, or when something more serious has gone wrong. Most concerns can be sorted out quickly with a conversation and never need to become a formal complaint.

1.3 In almost every case, the quickest way to resolve a concern or complaint is to speak to the member of staff most directly involved – usually a class teacher or form tutor – or to contact the school office.

1.4 The vast majority of concerns or complaints are resolved quickly, without needing to use the formal procedure. If we are unable to resolve your concern this way, the formal stages of our complaints procedure are set out in this document.

2 Aims

2.1 Our Trust aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of pupils at our schools.

2.2 We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

2.3 The school or Trust (if the complaint has been sent to the CEO or Trustees) will aim to give the Complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, we will ensure that we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the Trust and school websites. Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

2.4 When responding to complaints, we aim to :

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate and full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect Complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat Complainants with respect and courtesy
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep Complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the Complainant can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

3 Legislation and Guidance

3.1 This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which states that we must have and make available a written procedure to deal with complaints from parents of pupils at our schools.

3.2 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association. In addition, it addresses duties set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework with regard to dealing with complaints about our Trust's fulfilment of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

4 Definitions and Scope

4.1 Definitions

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:

- A concern is defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.' Our schools will resolve concerns through day to day communication as far as possible.
- A complaint is defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or lack of action.'

4.2 Scope

The Trust intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when Complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

4.3 This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Safeguarding matters
- Exclusion
- Whistleblowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

4.4 Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) about the school's support are within the scope of this policy but not related to statutory assessment. Such complaints should first be made to the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)/headteacher; they will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEND policy includes information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.

4.5 Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned, such as external schools' letting agencies for out of hours' activities.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Complainant

The Complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Explain the complaint as early as possible
- Limit the complaint to roughly 2 sides of A4 and minimise the use of AI tools
- Co-operate with the school in seeking a resolution
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings
- Ask for assistance if needed
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Refrain from publishing details about the complaint on social media and respect confidentiality

5.2 The Investigator

An individual will be appointed to investigate the complaint, and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the headteacher or complaints committee which includes the facts and potential solutions

5.3 The Trust's Governance Manager

- Will be the contact point for the Complainant and the Governor complaints committee, including circulating the relevant papers and evidence before complaints committee meetings
- Will arrange the complaints hearing
- Will record and circulate the minutes and outcome of the hearing

5.4 The Committee Chair

- Will chair the meeting, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect throughout
- Will make sure all parties see the relevant information, understand the purpose of the committee, and are allowed to present their case

6 Principles for Investigation

6.1 When investigating a complaint we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the Complainant feels would put things right

Timescales

6.2 The Complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

6.3 When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the next school day.

6.4 If at any point we cannot meet the time scales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the Complainant
- Send the Complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

Complaints about our Fulfilment of Early Years' Requirements

6.5 We will investigate all written complaints relating to the Trust's fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and notify the Complainant of the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will keep a record of the complaint (see section 10) and make this available to Ofsted on request.

6.6 Parents and carers can notify Ofsted if they believe that the school is not meeting Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, by calling 0300 123 4234 or 0300 123 4666, or by emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. An online contact form is also available at https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted#orgcontacts.

6.7 We will notify parents and carers if we become aware that the school is to be inspected by Ofsted. We will also supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and carers of children attending the setting on a regular basis.

7 Other Matters affecting how we handle Complaints

7.1 We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However the Trust retains the right, if appropriate, to determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

7.2 If any other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

7.3 If a Complainant commences legal action against The Bishop Fraser Trust in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded. Where legal action has commenced, any contact must be in writing to the Trust's Governance Manager. Correspondence to any other individual will not receive a response.

8 Resolving Complaints

8.1 At each stage in the procedure, the school wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is not upheld, or upheld in whole or upheld in part. In addition we may if appropriate offer one or more of the following:

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that we will try to ensure that the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- An apology
- Feedback to the subject of a complaint where appropriate

9 Withdrawal of Complaints

9.1 If a Complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

10 Stages of Complaint (not complaints against the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors)

10.1 The complaints procedure consists of three stages:

- An Informal Stage
- A Formal Stage
- A Panel Hearing

10.2 All meetings at all stages will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a Complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before recording of meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

Stage 1: Informal Stage

10.3 The Trust will take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly. It may be the case that the provision or clarification of information will resolve the issue.

10.4 The Complainant should first raise the complaint as soon as possible with the relevant member of staff to try and resolve the issue or the headteacher as appropriate, either in person or by letter, telephone or email. If the Complainant is unclear who to contact or how to contact them, they should contact their child's school office by phone/email, details of which can be found on each school's website.

10.5 The school will acknowledge informal complaints by email/telephone conversation within 2 school days and investigate and provide a response within 10 school days. The informal stage will typically involve a meeting between the Complainant and the member of staff investigating the complaint and/or the subject of the complaint, as appropriate.

10.6 If the complaint is not resolved informally the Complainant may escalate this to the next stage, which is to make a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Formal Stage

10.7 The formal stage involves the Complainant putting the complaint to the headteacher in writing as follows:

By completing the complaints form shown in Appendix A and sending it to school by email or letter.

10.8 By a third party acting on behalf of the Complainant but still using Appendix A to log the formal complaint.

10.9 The Complainant should provide details such as relevant dates, times, and the names of witnesses of events, alongside copies of any relevant documents, why they feel the complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily in the informal stage and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

10.10 If Complainants need assistance raising a formal complaint, they can contact the school office.

- The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will call a meeting to clarify concerns and seek a resolution. The Complainant may be accompanied to this meeting and should inform the school of the identity of their companion in advance.
- In certain circumstances, the school may need to refuse a request for a particular individual to attend any such meeting – for example, if there is a conflict of interest. If this is the case, the school will notify the Complainant as soon as they are aware, so that the Complainant could arrange alternative accompaniment.
- The headteacher (or designated member of the senior leadership team) will then conduct their own investigation. The written conclusion of this investigation will be sent to the Complainant within 10 school days.
- If the Complainant still feels their complaint has not been sufficiently resolved they may wish to proceed to the final stage of the procedure. Notification of this must be within 5 school days of receiving the written conclusion to the stage 2 outcome. The Complainant should notify the Trust's Governance Manager by letter or email, or through a third party acting on behalf of the Complainant.

10.11 The Governance Manager will need the details of the complaint as set out above, as well as details from the Complainant on how they feel the previous stage of the procedure has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, and what they feel would resolve the complaint.

10.12 Requests received outside of this time frame may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

10.13 The Governance Manager will acknowledge receipt of the request within 2 school days.

Stage 3: Review Panel

10.14 Complaints will only be escalated to the panel hearing stage if the Complainant is able to provide information as to why they felt the outcome of stage 2 has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, or there has been an issue with the process that would warrant this being heard by a review panel.

10.15 The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the governors and must consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The members of the panel will be made up of at least two school governors and one independent person (e.g. a governor from another Trust school) who have not been involved in the issue.

10.16 The panel will have access to the existing record of the complaint's progress.

10.17 The Complainant must have reasonable notice of the date of the review panel; however, the review panel reserves the right to convene at their convenience rather than that of the Complainant, but a minimum of 5 school days' notice will be given. At the review panel meeting, the Complainant and the investigating officer and Headteacher from the school, as appropriate, will be present. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

10.18 The Complainant must be allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by one person if they wish.

10.19 A person aged 18 or under will be permitted to attend a panel hearing when invited to do so by the panel and will then leave when their submission has been presented and questions posed.

10.20 At the meeting, everyone will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called, as appropriate, to present their evidence.

10.21 The panel, the Complainant and the school representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions. Once the Complainant and school representative(s) have presented their cases, they will be asked to leave, and evidence will then be considered.

10.22 The panel will then put together its findings and recommendations from the case. The panel will also provide copies of the minutes of the hearing and the findings and recommendations to the Complainant and, where relevant, the individual who is the subject of the complaint, and make a copy available for inspection by the Chair of Trustees and CEO. The Chair of Trustees and CEO will be provided with copies of the complaint outcome letters.

10.23 The school will inform those involved of the decision in writing within 5 school days.

11 Complaints against the Headteacher, a Governor or the Governing Board, or the CEO

Stage 1: Informal Stage

11.1 Complaints made against the headteacher, or a member of the local governing board (not the chair) should be directed to the Chair of the local governing board in the first instance who will assign a suitably skilled and impartial governor to carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out above).

11.2 If the complaint is about the chair of governors or CEO, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of Trustees who will assign a suitably skilled and impartial Trustee to carry out the steps at stage 1 (set out above).

Stage 2: Formal Stage

11.3 The formal stage involves the Complainant putting the complaint to either:

- The Chair of the local governing body (for complaints against the Headteacher or member of the local governing board), who will, with the support of the CEO, conduct their own investigation in line with 6.2.
- The Chair of Trustees (for complaints against the chair of governors or the CEO), who will conduct their own investigation in line with 6.2.

11.4 The Complainant must complete in writing the form in Appendix 1

11.5 The Chair of the local governing body or the Chair of Trustees (as appropriate) will write a formal response to the Complainant at the end of their investigation.

Stage 3: Review Panel

11.6 Complaints will only be escalated to the panel hearing stage if the Complainant is able to provide information as to why they felt the outcome of stage 2 has not addressed their complaint sufficiently, or there has been an issue with the process that would warrant this being heard by a review panel

11.7 The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Trust and must consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of which will be a trustee.

11.8 If the complaint is about a Trustee, the Chair of Trustees will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is about the Chair of Trustees, a committee of independent persons will hear the complaint. They will be sourced from the Members of the Trust and will carry out the steps at stage 3.

11.9 The decision of the Complaints Panel is final and will not be re-investigated by the Trust. If you believe that we have not followed this procedure or have not complied with our legal obligations you can ask the Department for Education to consider your concerns (see next section).

12 Referring Complaints on Completion of the School's Procedure

12.1 If the Complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of the Trust's complaints procedure, they can refer their complaint to the DfE. The DfE will check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by the school. The DfE will not overturn a school's decision about a complaint. However, it will investigate:

- Whether there was undue delay, or the school did not comply with its own complaint's procedure
- Whether the school was in breach of its funding agreement with the secretary of state
- Whether the school has failed to comply with any other legal obligation

12.2 If the school did not deal with the complaint properly, it will be asked to reinvestigate the complaint. If the school's complaints procedure is found to not meet regulations, the school will be asked to correct its procedure accordingly.

12.3 For more information or to refer a complaint, see the following webpage: https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school

12.4 We will include this information in the outcome letter.

13 Unreasonable Behaviour by Complainants

13.1 We are committed to handling every complaint fairly, but if we consider that a Complainant's behaviour is unreasonable then we may not be able to take a complaint any further until the behaviour changes.

13.2 Unreasonable behaviour includes a Complainant doing any of the following:

- Changing the basis of the complaint as it proceeds
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant material, or raising large n umbers of unimportant questions
- Making unjustified complaints about staff dealing with the matter, or seeking their replacement
- Seeking an unrealistic outcome, or making significant demands on school time through frequent, lengthy contact in person, in writing, by email or by telephone
- Commenting unreasonably or publishing unacceptable information about the complaint on social media or other public platforms
- Using threats, intimidation, abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- Knowingly providing false information or stalking or harassing members of staff
- Recording meetings or telephone calls covertly

13.3 While we are looking into your complaint, please keep your contact with us proportionate. Repeated calls, emails or letters about the same point slow us down and can delay the outcome.

13.4 As a first step, if unreasonable behaviour arises we will usually have an informal conversations explaining what the issue is and asking for the behaviour to change before we take any formal action.

13.5 If the behaviour continues, the Headteacher, Governance Manager or member of the HR Team will write to the Complainant to confirm that the behaviour is unreasonable and ask for it to change. Where contact has become excessive or disruptive we may also agree a communication plan – for example, setting out who to contact and how often. We will review the plan after six months.

13.6 For serious incident, including aggression, violence, stalking or harassment, we will report the matter to the police straight away and confirm our actions in writing. We may also bar the person from our premises and from contacting our staff directly.

13.7 Where any of the behaviour in this section applies, we may decide not to take the complaint or concern any further. We will write to confirm this and set out the reasons. If

you believe we have not followed this procedure, you can ask the Department for Education to look at how we handled the matter (see section 11).

14 Unreasonably Persistent Complaints

14.1 Most complaints raised will be valid, and therefore we will treat them seriously. However a complaint may become unreasonable if the Complainant:

- Has made the same complaint before, and it's already been resolved by following the school's complaints procedure.
- Makes a complaint that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, defamatory or repetitive.
- Knowingly provides false information.
- Insists on pursuing a complaint that is unfounded, or out of scope of the complaint's procedure.
- Pursues a valid complaint, but in an unreasonable manner e.g. refuses to articulate the complaint, refused to co-operate with this complaint's procedure, or insists that the complaint is dealt with in ways that are incompatible with this procedure and the time frames it sets out, and/or changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation goes on.
- Makes a complaint designed to cause disruption, annoyance or excessive demands on school time.
- Seeks unrealistic outcomes, or a solution that lacks any serious purpose or value.

Steps we will take

14.2 We will take every reasonable step to address the Complainant's concerns and give them a clear statement of our position and their options. We will maintain our role as an objective arbiter throughout the process, including when we meet with individuals. We will follow our complaints procedure as normal (as outlined above) wherever possible.

14.3 It the Complainant continues to contact the school in a disruptive way; we may put communications strategies in place. We may:

- Give the Complainant a single point of contact via an email address
- Limit the number of times the Complainant can make contact, such as a fixed number per term
- Ask the Complainant to engage a third party to act on their behalf, such as Citizens Advice
- Put any other strategy in place as necessary

Stopping Responding

14.4 We may stop responding to the Complainant when all of these factors are met:

- We believe we have taken all reasonable steps to help address their concerns
- We have provided a clear statement of our position and their options
- The Complainant contacts us repeatedly, and we believe their intention is to cause disruption or inconvenience

14.5 Where we stop responding, we will inform the individual that we intend to do so. We will also explain that we will still consider any new complaints they make.

14.6 In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from our school site.

Duplicate Complaints

14.7 If we have resolved a complaint under this procedure and receive a duplicate complaint on the same subject from a partner, family member or other individual, we will assess whether there are aspects that we hadn't previously considered, or any new information we need to take into account.

14.8 If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects, we will:

- Tell the new Complainant that we have already investigated and responded to this issue, and the local process is complete
- Direct them to the DfE if they are dissatisfied with our original handling of the complaint

If there are new aspects, we will follow this procedure again.

Complaints Campaigns

14.9 Where the school receives a large volume of complaints about the same topic or subject, especially if these come from Complainants unconnected with the school, the school may respond to these complaints by:

- Publishing a single response on the school website
- Sending a template response to all the Complainants

14.10 If Complainants are not satisfied with the school's response, or wish to pursue the complaint further, the normal procedures will apply.

15 Record Keeping

15.1 The school will record the progress of all complaints, including information about actions taken at all stages, the stage at which the complaint was resolved, and the final outcome. The records will also include copies of letters and emails, and notes relating to meetings and phone calls.

15.2 This material will be treated as confidential and held centrally and will be viewed only by those involved in investigating the complaint or on the review panel.

15.3 This is except where the secretary of state (or someone acting on their behalf) or the Complainant requests access to records of a complaint through a freedom of information (FOI) request or through a subject access request under the terms of the Data Protection Act, or where the material must be made available during a school inspection.

15.4 Records of complaints will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law and our privacy notices.

15.5 The details of the complaint, including the names of individuals involved, will not be shared with the whole governing board in case a review panel needs to be organised at a later point.

15.6 Where all the governing board is aware of the substance of the complaint before the review panel stage, the Trust will (where reasonably practicable) arrange for an independent panel to hear the complaint.

15.7 Complainants also have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. The decision to approve this request is made by the Trust board, who will not unreasonably withhold consent.

16 Learning Lessons

16.1 The local governing board /Trust board will review any underlying issues raised by complaints with the Headteacher/CEO where appropriate, and respecting confidentiality, to determine whether there are any improvements that the school can make to its procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

17 Monitoring Arrangements

17.1 The local governing board, along with the headteacher and CEO will monitor the effectiveness of the complaint's procedure in its school, ensuring that complaints are handled properly. The local governing board, along with the headteacher and CEO, will track the number and nature of complaints, and review underlying issues as stated in section 11.

17.2 The complaints records are logged and managed by a nominated individual in each school. This will normally be the Headteacher's Personal Assistant, if the Headteacher has a PA. If not, the Headteacher will nominate who will undertake this responsibility and indicate this on the formal complaints form for their school. At each review, the policy will be approved by the full board of Trustees.

18 Links with other Policies

18.1 Policies dealing with other forms of complaints include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Admissions Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Staff Grievance Procedures
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures
- SEND Policy
- Privacy Notices

Appendix A:
Formal Complaint Form: Stage 2

Please complete and return to the Trust's Governance Manager who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

School name:
Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):

Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone

number: Email address:

Please <u>underline</u> who you are addressing this form to :

a) **To the headteacher (for complaints about a member of staff or a school issue)**

b) **The Chair of the local governing body (for complaints against the Headteacher or member of the local governing board)**

c) **The Chair of Trustees (for complaints against the Chair of Governors or CEO)**

Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it. PLEASE LIMIT YOUR RESPONSE TO ABOUT 2 SIDES OF A4 AND MINIMISE THE USE OF AI TOOLS. **Please give details about why you feel that the complaint was not satisfactory dealt with in relation to the informal stage**
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage? This must be completed.

APPENDIX B

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Name of person completing the EIA:	Nicola McGonagle
Role of person completing the EIA:	Director of People
Date EIA completed:	October 2025

Policy or Process Information		
Name of policy or process:	**Trust Complaints Policy**	
Purpose and intended aim of the policy or process (use policy or trip/event name)	To enable concerns or complaints to be investigated and resolved fairly and at the earliest possible opportunity.	
Name of person responsible for the policy or process and its review:	Nicola McGonagle, Director of People	
Protected Characteristic	**Negative Impact Identified**	**Explanation Of Impact Analysis and Any Concessions Made**
Age:	N/A	No age-related barriers identified. Ensure information is written in plain language and available in alternative formats appropriate for younger or older Complainants.
Disability:	Sight or learning disabilities	1. Provide support to help individuals understand the complaints process, including reading assistance or help completing forms. 2. Make the procedure available in accessible formats (Braille, large print, Easy Read, audio) as required. 3. Ensure that communication needs (e.g, BSL interpreters, accessible meetings) are met throughout the complaints process.

Sex:	N/A	No sex-related disadvantage anticipated. Ensure complaints about sex-based discrimination or harassment are handled sensitively and in line with policy.
Gender reassignment: **S.7 Equality Act 2010. Where a person is proposing, is undergoing or has undergone, a process (or part of) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex. No longer a requirement to be under medical supervision.**	N/A	No negative impacts identified. Ensure confidentiality is strictly protected and that Complainants are addressed using their correct name and pronouns. Provide a safe and respectful environment for individuals raising complaints related to gender identity.
Ethnicity:	N/A	Ensure the complaints process is culturally sensitive and free from bias. Provide interpreting or translation services where needed to support full participation.
Religion or belief:	N/A	Ensure the scheduling of meetings or interviews accommodates religious observance where possible. Be sensitive to religious practices that may influence how complaints are raised or discussed
Sexual orientation:	N/A	Ensure Complainants feel safe and supported when raising concerns relating to sexual orientation. Protect confidentiality and respond appropriately to any allegation of discrimination or harassment.
Marriage or civil partnership:	N/A	No differential impact anticipated. Ensure decisions

		are free from bias relating to marital or partnership status.
Pregnancy and maternity:	N/A	Ensure the complaints process is accessible for individuals on maternity leave, including flexible meeting arrangements and remote access. Avoid any disadvantage caused by absence due to pregnancy or maternity.
Carers/caring responsibilities	n/a	Be flexible with meeting times or deadlines where caring responsibilities may impact a Complainant's availability. Offer remote or asynchronous participation where appropriate.
Socio economic status	n/a	Ensure the process remains accessible to individuals with limited financial means, including avoiding unnecessary travel requirements and providing written information in free, accessible formats.
Other factors to be considered, e.g contract type, grade	n/a	Ensure all Complainants, regardless of contract type or grade, have equal access to the complaints process and are treated fairly without hierarchy-related bias.