



## Compliments and Complaints Policy

### Purpose and scope

- 1.0** Ambitious about Autism strives to operate to the highest standards. We welcome feedback from individuals and organisations that we work with, including pupils and learners, parents and carers, partners and our local communities. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us to evaluate and improve our work.
- 1.1** Ambitious about Autism has a single Compliments and Complaints Policy covering all of its activities and services, including the Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust, a Multi Academy Trust.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2** This policy does not relate to situations where Ambitious about Autism employees have a complaint or grievance. In these circumstances individuals should follow the internal grievance or whistleblowing procedures as outlined in the staff handbook.
- 1.3** Trustees and Governors who wish to make a complaint are expected to follow the procedure outlined in this policy.
- 1.4** The overall **objectives** of the Compliments and Complaints Policy are to:  
Provide an accessible, simple framework for listening and responding to all feedback and complaints;

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- 4.2 If 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. If this happens, we will inform you of a proposed new timescale.
- 4.3 If a complainant commences legal action in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.
- 4.4 Timescales for each stage of the process are set out below.

**Who is involved in the process?**

- 5.0 The Head of Governance and Compliance is the designated Complaints Officer and is responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed, and information is recorded properly. The Complaints Officer may nominate a substitute, for example a member of TreeHouse School's, The Rise School's,

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6.9 The Complaints Officer (or the nominated substitute, as described in section 5 above) will advise you that if you are not satisfied with the response to their complaint, and the action that is being proposed, you may appeal and progress to Stage Three – Appeal.

**Stage Three Appealing the outcome of a formal complaint**

7.0 If you wish to appeal the outcome of the investigation led by the Complaints Officer, you must write to the Chief Executive of Ambitious about Autism within 15 working days of receiving the Complaints Officer’s written response.

7.1 The Chief Executive is responsible for Stage Three of the complaints process. They will review the Stage Two investigation led by the Complaints Officer and will confirm in writing, within 15 days, one of the following actions:  
that no further action is taken by Ambitious about Autism; or  
specify changes to the Stage Two written response and actions.

7.2 ~~7.12 40082~~ The Chief Executive will advise you that

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## Appendix 1: Managing unreasonable or serial complaints

Ambitious about Autism and Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaA/AaAST) is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our educational settings or central charity team. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

AaA/AaAST defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as, if the complainant:

- Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- Refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process ;
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure;
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice;

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