



Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

NewHeart Learning is committed to providing a high-quality education and a safe, supportive environment for all pupils. We encourage open communication and take all complaints seriously. This procedure is intended to ensure that complaints are managed fairly, promptly, and transparently.

2. Scope

This procedure covers complaints relating to:

- Concerns relating to pupil welfare or the handling of safeguarding matters, where these are appropriate for consideration through the complaints process;
- Curriculum or teaching;
- Behaviour management;
- Admissions, attendance, or inclusion issues
- Staff conduct;
- Any other concerns affecting pupils, parents, or staff.

This procedure does **not** replace statutory safeguarding reporting requirements or whistleblowing procedures.

Safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse and concerns about the conduct of adults working with children will be managed immediately under NewHeart Learning's safeguarding procedures where appropriate. The complaints procedure will not delay or replace safeguarding action, referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), children's social care or the police where required.

3. Principles

- Complaints will be treated seriously, sensitively, and confidentially.
- The procedure is accessible to all pupils, parents, staff, and other stakeholders.
- Complaints will be managed promptly and without undue delay.
- Individuals making a complaint will not be penalised for raising concerns in good faith.
- Where a complaint involves multiple agencies, NewHeart Learning will consult with the referring school or Local Authority to determine the most appropriate process for investigation.
- Complaints or allegations relating to staff behaviour may be managed under the organisation's safeguarding, disciplinary or LADO procedures rather than the standard complaints process.
- Staff will not be expected to respond to abusive, threatening, or unreasonable behaviour. In such circumstances, NewHeart Learning may modify communication arrangements or terminate contact.

Persistent or Unreasonable Complaint Behaviour

NewHeart Learning is committed to responding fairly to complaints. Raising a complaint, expressing dissatisfaction or challenging a decision will not in itself be regarded as unreasonable behaviour.

In a small number of cases, communication may become persistent or unreasonable, for example where a complainant repeatedly raises substantially the same matter after it has been fully considered, refuses to engage with the complaints process, makes excessive demands that significantly interfere with the provision's operation, or communicates in an abusive, threatening or intimidating manner.

Where this occurs, NewHeart Learning may introduce proportionate communication arrangements, such as identifying a single point of contact, requiring communication in writing or setting reasonable limits on the frequency of correspondence.

Any decision to restrict communication will be made by a senior leader or Director, recorded with reasons, communicated to the complainant and kept under review.

Restrictions on communication will not prevent NewHeart Learning from considering genuinely new concerns, particularly safeguarding concerns.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered where possible; however, investigations may be limited where insufficient information is provided.

4. How to make a complaint

A copy of this Complaints Policy and Complaints Form is available:

- On request from the provision
- By emailing: daniella@newheartlearning.co.uk
- By contacting the provision directly

Complaints can be submitted:

- In writing via email to daniella@newheartlearning.co.uk
- In writing using the Complaints Form attached to this policy

If a complainant requires support to access this procedure (e.g., literacy support, language translation, disability access), reasonable adjustments will be made.

Complaints Raising Safeguarding or Other Serious Concerns

Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, allegation against a member of staff, suspected criminal activity or another serious risk to a pupil, the matter will be referred immediately to the DSL or other appropriate senior person and managed in accordance with the relevant safeguarding procedures.

This may include referral or consultation with the LADO, children's social care, police, commissioning school or local authority as appropriate.

The complaints process may be paused or adapted where necessary to avoid prejudicing a safeguarding, criminal, disciplinary or other external investigation. The complainant will be informed where appropriate.

5. Stages of the Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- Complainants are encouraged to discuss concerns informally with the relevant staff member (e.g., class teacher, SENDCo, or pastoral lead).
- Complainants are encouraged to seek informal resolution where appropriate. However, informal resolution is not required where the concern is serious, relates to safeguarding, concerns the conduct of a senior member of staff, or where the complainant reasonably considers that informal resolution would be inappropriate.
- Staff will seek to resolve the concern quickly and keep a brief record of the discussion.
- Most complaints are resolved successfully at this stage.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

- If the issue is not resolved informally, the complainant should submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head of Provision via email at daniella@newheartlearning.co.uk or using the attached Complaints Form.
- The Head will acknowledge receipt within **five working days** and investigate the matter.
- An investigation may involve interviews, review of documentation, or consultation with relevant parties.
- The complainant will receive a written response within **twenty working days**, explaining findings and any actions taken.
- If the investigation requires more time due to complexity, availability of witnesses, or external involvement, the complainant will be informed of the delay and provided with an updated timeframe.
- Where the complaint concerns the Head of Provision, it should be submitted to a Director of NewHeart Learning who has not been directly involved in the matter.
- Where a complaint concerns a Director, it will be considered by another Director who has not been involved in the matter or, where appropriate, an independent person will be appointed to consider the complaint.
- The written response will explain whether the complaint is **upheld, partially upheld or not upheld**, provide appropriate reasons for the decision and identify any actions or learning arising from the complaint, subject to confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

Following the Internal Complaints Process

Once NewHeart Learning's internal complaints process has been completed, the complainant will be informed that the internal procedure has been exhausted.

Where appropriate, the complainant may raise concerns with the organisation responsible for commissioning or overseeing the placement, such as the commissioning school, academy or local authority.

Depending on the nature of the concern, other external bodies may also have a relevant role, including children's social care, the LADO or police. NewHeart Learning will provide appropriate information about relevant routes where applicable.

NewHeart Learning will cooperate appropriately with any lawful external investigation, safeguarding enquiry or commissioner review.

External agencies have their own thresholds, responsibilities and procedures. Completion of NewHeart Learning's complaints procedure does not guarantee that an external body will investigate a complaint.

6. Record Keeping

NewHeart Learning will maintain a secure record of formal complaints, including the nature of the complaint, investigation undertaken, outcome, actions arising and whether the complaint was upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

Complaint records will be retained securely in accordance with NewHeart Learning's retention arrangements and applicable data-protection requirements.

Complaint information will be reviewed periodically to identify recurring themes, lessons learned, safeguarding issues and opportunities to improve practice.

Records relating to safeguarding allegations or concerns will also be managed in accordance with NewHeart Learning's safeguarding record-keeping requirements.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All personal data will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
- Details of complaints will be shared only with those directly involved in resolving the matter.

8. Monitoring and Review

- The Directors will review this procedure annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or practice.
- The review will consider lessons learned and ensure the process remains effective and accessible.

Date of last review:	30 August 2026
Date to review:	30 August 2027
Author:	Daniella Hart Head of Provision
Signed:	<i>Daniella Hart</i>

Complaints Form

Please complete and return this form to Daniella Hart, Head of Provision
daniella@newheartlearning.co.uk

Your Name: Address: Telephone Number: Email Address:	
Pupils Name:	
Relationship to Child:	
Details of the Complaint	
Including background, stating the relevant facts and events involved chronologically, together with relevant dates. If you have had several issues, please list these, and provide details of each separately.	
Details of how you have raised your concerns	
Please give a description of the steps you have taken to resolve this matter informally, for example by raising it with the relevant staff.	
Names of those people whom you have raised the complaint to informally	
The outcome at informal stage	
Please give reasons why you feel that your complaint remains unresolved	
Please let us know what resolution you seek and why you believe this to be appropriate:	
Are you attaching any relevant documentation: If so, please list details of this here:	
Signed:	
Date:	