

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Effective 1 September 2026 | Review date: September 2027

Organisation	The Community Schools CIC
Company number	14658587
Registered office	Office 211, Epicentre, Enterprise Way, Withersfield, Haverhill, England CB9 7LR
Policy owner	Claire Meadows-Smith - Principal
Safeguarding leads	DSL: Hayley Coull Deputy DSL: Claire Meadows-Smith
Tutors' Association	Corporate Member CO 306

The Community Schools CIC aims to provide a high-quality, safe and professional tutoring service. We welcome concerns and complaints as an opportunity to resolve problems promptly, fairly and proportionately and to improve our service.

1. Scope and principles

This procedure is available to parents/carers, students, schools and other clients. Complaints will be handled respectfully, impartially and confidentially so far as possible, without disadvantage to a student, and with appropriate records. No student will be treated less favourably because they or their parent/carer has raised a concern or complaint.

A safeguarding concern, disclosure, allegation about an adult working with children, or a low-level concern must be dealt with under The Community Schools CIC safeguarding procedures and must not be delayed by this complaints process. Where a complaint contains both safeguarding and service issues, the safeguarding element will take priority.

2. Stage One - informal resolution

Where appropriate, raise the concern promptly with the tutor or The Community Schools administration team. We will clarify the issue, make reasonable enquiries and try to resolve it informally. We aim to acknowledge an informal concern within 3 working days and, where possible, resolve it within 10 working days.

3. Stage Two - formal complaint

If the matter is serious, is unsuitable for informal resolution, or remains unresolved, send the complaint in writing to Claire Meadows-Smith, Principal, at claire@thecommunityschools.co.uk or to the registered office above. Please explain what happened, the outcome sought and any relevant dates or documents. Reasonable adjustments will be made where a complainant needs help to make a complaint.

We will normally acknowledge a formal complaint within 3 working days. An appropriate person will investigate. This may include speaking to those involved and reviewing relevant records. We aim to provide a written outcome within 20 working days. If more time is reasonably required, we will explain why and give a revised timescale.

4. Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review within 10 working days of the Stage Two outcome. Where reasonably practicable, the review will be carried out by a director or senior person who was not responsible for the original decision. The review will consider whether the complaint was handled fairly, whether relevant evidence was considered and whether the outcome was reasonable. We aim to issue the review outcome within 15 working days.

5. External resolution

The Community Schools CIC is a corporate member of The Tutors' Association, membership CO 306. After our internal process has been completed, the parties may consider appropriate Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Where the matter falls within The Tutors' Association's current rules and remit, a complainant may approach The Tutors' Association.

Nothing in this procedure prevents a person from contacting the police, local authority children's services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Information Commissioner's Office or another appropriate regulator, or from exercising legal rights.

6. Records, confidentiality and learning

We will keep an appropriate written record of formal complaints, investigations, decisions and actions in accordance with our Privacy Policy and retention arrangements. Information will be shared only where there is a legitimate need, including safeguarding or legal requirements. Complaint records will be stored securely on authorised Community Schools systems with access restricted to those who need it.

We will review themes and lessons from complaints to improve our policies, training and service.

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