



Complaints Policy

October 2022

Who can make a complaint?

Any parent/carer or professional, may make a complaint to Connect2Education Ltd about any provision of facilities or services that we provide.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as *'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'*.

A complaint may be defined as *'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'*.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Connect2Education Ltd takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Please refer all complaints, in the first instance, to the Head of Teaching and Learning Maxine Tasker.

Contact Maxine Tasker

Head of Teaching and Learning

Connect2Education Ltd

Unit 2 Roseberry Court

Stokesley TS9 5QT

Tel 01642 961230 Email maxine@connect2education.co.uk

If your complaint is regarding the Head of Teaching and Learning, please refer to Julie Phillips Director at the address above or on email to info@connect2education.co.uk

If your complaint is regarding a Director, there is a separate complaints procedure which is included in this document. (see page 5)

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant if they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with the Head of Teaching and Learning in the first instance. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complaints against teaching and support staff who work at Connect2Education, should be made in writing to Maxine Tasker. Please mark communication as Private & Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Head of Teaching and Learning should be addressed to Julie Phillips Director. Please mark as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this policy document. If you require help in completing the form, please contact Maxine Tasker or Julie Phillips. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head of Teaching and Learning, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this period if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of facilities or services by Connect2Education. Complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, are listed below:

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition for SEN students 	<p>Transition proposals should be raised with the school, academy and/or local authority,</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation 	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are overseen under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>Connect2Education Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing 	<p>Whistleblowing policy is outlined in the staff handbook.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education, who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff conduct 	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under Connect2Educations internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member because of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) 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 a complainant commences legal action against Connect2Education Ltd 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.

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, Connect2Education Ltd wants to resolve the complaint. If deemed appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been managed differently or better

- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been 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 Connect2Education policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

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

Complaints Procedure:

The stages for making a complaint to Connect2Education

Written records must be made by Connect2Education at each stage of the procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, the Head of Teaching and Learning must establish the seriousness of the complaint. An informal approach will be adopted when appropriate. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, or involve safeguarding, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Stage 2

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the member of the public, professional or parent/carer should be advised that a formal complaint may be made, and the following procedure should be explained to them.

- a) A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the attached form should be used. If verbally, a member of the Management Team should take a statement.
- b) Formal complaints must be made to the Head of Teaching and Learning (unless they are about the Head of Teaching and Learning), via the address given for the Connect2Education Ltd office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone.
- c) The Head of Teaching and Learning will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 10 working school days. Within this response, the Head of Teaching and Learning will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like. The Head of Teaching and Learning will consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

During the investigation, the Head of Teaching and Learning will:

- a) if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish

- b) keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head of Teaching and Learning will provide a formal written response within 28 working days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If the Head of Teaching and Learning is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Connect2Education Ltd will take to resolve the complaint.

The Head of Teaching and Learning will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2

If the complaint is about the Head of Teaching and Learning a Director of Connect2Education will complete the actions at Stage 1.

If the complaint is about a director:

- Jointly about the Head of Teaching and Learning and a Director
- The whole of the senior management team at Connect2Education Ltd

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent HR company. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

Stage 3

- a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision, then the independent HR company will be requested to re-examine the complaint and may wish to conduct further interviews, examine files / notes. They will respond in writing. Their decision will be final except in the case of safeguarding concerns, in which case, the matter may be referred to external agencies such as the LADO or police .



Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Head of Teaching and Learning who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address: Postcode: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at Connect2Education about it.
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature:
Date:
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By whom:
Complaint referred to:
Date:

Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- co-operate with Connect2Education or the independent HR company in seeking a solution to the complaint
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- ask for assistance as needed
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media

- Adhere to GDPR rules: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by providing comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:

- sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved
- interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint
- consideration of records and other relevant information
- analysing information
- consulting with the complainant as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- be mindful of the timescales to respond
- prepare a comprehensive report that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The Head of Teaching & Learning will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator (member of administration team for Connect2Education or HR company if employed to investigate as an independent body)

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- be aware of issues regarding:
 - sharing third party information
 - additional support. Complainants may need this when making a complaint and may include language interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person, an appropriate representative or advocate
- keep written records.

If you require clarification of any of the wording in this policy, please contact:

Julie Phillips

Director

Connect2Education Ltd

Unit 2

Roseberry Court

Stokesley

North Yorkshire

TS9 5QT

Tel 01642 961230

Email: info@connect2education.co.uk