



Cornwall
Education
Learning Trust

Complaints Policy

Our Mission

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), our mission is clear: to provide every learner with an **exceptional educational experience**. One that enables them to thrive, achieve and succeed in life. We believe in a **100%** mindset, that every learner, in every classroom, in every school, deserves the very best we can offer. For us, 100% means no compromise: no learner left behind, no community overlooked, and no opportunity wasted.

Our strategic goals reflect this ambition. We are committed to empowering and growing our people, building an ambitious all-through entitlement, forging exceptional relationships with our communities, transforming provision through meaningful partnerships, and leading an ethical, effective and innovative organisation. These are not just aspirations; they are promises that shape the way we work and the culture we are building together.



Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. We believe in the power of **Collaboration**, building strong relationships and working together as one team to achieve our collective goals. We are committed to **Empowerment**, creating a culture where initiative, innovation and trust flourish, and where every individual feels valued, respected and motivated.

As a Trust, we are grounded in promoting **Leadership**, sharing a moral and ethical purpose to improve the lives of others and make a lasting difference for our learners and communities. And we embrace **Transformation**, approaching change positively so that we can all become our best selves and do our best work.

These values guide every decision we make and every action we take. They are the foundation of our Trust and the reason we can offer such exceptional opportunities for our learners and staff. If you choose to join CELT, you will be part of a values-driven organisation where people are supported to grow, contribute, and thrive.



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1. Policy Overview

1.1 Policy Purpose and Aims

This policy ensures that complaints are handled fairly, promptly, and transparently across all academies within CELT. It applies to parents, carers, learners, staff, and members of the public. The procedures laid out in this policy refer to parents/carers regarding their child. Complaints from individuals who are not parents/carers will be handled respectfully, using this procedure where appropriate.

We are committed to ensuring this policy is accessible to all. Alternative formats will be provided upon request.

1.2 Policy Approval and Review

Policy Version Number:	1.0
Approved By:	Trust Board
Approved On (Date):	08.12.2025
Review Period:	Annually
Policy Lead:	Deputy Trust Lead

1.3 Policy Version History

Policy Version	Date Issued	Summary of Changes
1.0	December 2025	Rewritten version 8.0



2. Complaints Policy

2.1 Principles

- Concerns should be raised with CELT or the relevant school promptly. Issues reported more than 3 months after the event are generally not considered. Exceptions may be made at the Trust's discretion.
- Complaints will be addressed in an open, honest, and impartial manner.
- Informal resolution will be encouraged wherever possible.
- All parties will be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Complaints will be managed within reasonable timeframes.
- Confidentiality will be maintained except where disclosure is legally required.

2.2 Scope

This policy does not cover:

- Admissions, exclusions, child protection, staff grievances, whistleblowing, data protection, or matters dealt with under separate statutory procedures.
- Complaints about external providers using Trust premises.

If the complaint falls outside the remit of this policy, the complainant will be advised of this in writing within 15 school days following receipt of the complaint with an explanation as to why. In some circumstances, it may be decided that the concern(s) fall within the remit of another policy or procedure.

2.3 Definitions

Concern: An expression of worry or doubt requiring reassurance.


Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about actions taken or lack of action.

2.4 Staged Procedure

In the first instance, concerns should be raised directly with the relevant member of staff at the school, allowing them a reasonable opportunity to respond. If, after exhausting all reasonable avenues for discussion and resolution within the school, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may proceed through all stages of the procedure outlined below.



START: You have a concern about your child's education or school experience. You believe that all appropriate channels for discussion and resolution with the school have been fully exhausted.



STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION:

Action: Raise concern promptly via complaints@celtrust.org

Optional: Use Stage 1 template (Appendix A).

Timeframe: Aim to resolve within 15 school days.

If resolved: End process.

If dissatisfied: Proceed to Stage 2.



STAGE 2 – FORMAL COMPLAINT:

Action: Submit written complaint using Stage 2 template (Appendix B) to complaints@celtrust.org If complaint concerns Headteacher, please address to the Trust Lead.

Include: Clear statement of actions you want taken, and why you feel it has not been resolved at Stage 1.

Timeframe: Aim to resolve within 15 school days (may extend if investigation needed).

If resolved: End process.

If dissatisfied: Proceed to Stage 3.



STAGE 3 – COMPLAINTS PANEL:

Action: Request escalation within 10 school days of Stage 2 outcome. Submit Stage 3 template (Appendix C) to complaints@celtrust.org

Hearing: Within 20 school days; decision within 5 school days.

Outcome: Complaint upheld/dismissed; recommendations made.

If resolved: End process.



2.5 Stage 1 Complaint - Informal Resolution

- If you believe that all appropriate channels for discussion and resolution with the school have been fully exhausted, please submit your concerns promptly via complaints@celtrust.org
- You may feel you wish to use the template in Appendix A to support your request.
- Most issues should be resolved within 15 school days.
- If you feel your complaint is unresolved, you may consider proceeding to Stage 2.

2.6 Stage 2 Complaint - Formal Complaint

- Please submit a written complaint using the template (Appendix B) to complaints@celtrust.org If your complaint concerns the headteacher, please address your email to the Trust Lead.
- It is very important that you include a clear statement of the reasonable actions that you would like the Academy to take to resolve your concern, and the aspects of **Stage 1** you are dissatisfied with. Without this information it may be difficult to proceed effectively.
- Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school days, and we aim to respond in writing within 15 school days. Please note: if investigations are required, this timeframe may be extended.
- You may be offered a meeting to clarify issues or queries.
- If you remain dissatisfied with the decision at Stage 2 (ie. It was not upheld) or you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may proceed to Stage 3.

2.6 Stage 3 Complaint - Complaints Panel

- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome or procedures of Stage 2, you must request to escalate within 10 school days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.
- Please submit a written complaint using the template (Appendix C) to complaints@celtrust.org to proceed to Stage 3.
- The panel will consist of three people who have not previously been involved in the stage 1 or 2 process. This will include an independent CELT Community Champion. Alongside members of the CELT Board of Trustees and/or the Trust Lead or nominated representative.
- A hearing will be arranged within 20 school days; and a decision communicated within 5 school days.
- Complainants may attend the panel hearing and be accompanied by a companion if they wish.
- The Panel may:
 - Dismiss or uphold the complaint (in whole or part).
 - Recommend actions or policy changes.



2.7 Stage 4 - Further Rights of Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Review Panel, you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Education Skills Funding Agency who have limited powers to review the Trust's handling of the complaint in accordance with the ESFA's 'Procedure for dealing with complaints about Academies'. At the time of writing this procedure, the ESFA procedure and the ESFA Academy complaints form are available at: [Complain about a school: State schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-a-school)

Parents may also complain to OFSTED. OFSTED will not normally investigate complaints concerning individual pupils. If there are any child protection concerns parents may pass these to social services, or the police.

2.8 Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and Harassment

The Trust may restrict contact or refuse further consideration where behaviour is unreasonable, abusive, repetitive or impacting on the day-to-day running of CELT's schools.

Measures may include:

- Limiting communication channels.
- Conducting hearings on written submissions only.
- Referring directly to Stage 4.

For the purpose of this policy, harassment refers to the unreasonable and persistent pursuit of actions that:

- Target one or more school staff members over a significant period of time;
- Cause ongoing distress to individual staff members;
- Have a serious negative impact on all or part of the school community;
- Are carried out in a way that feels intimidating or oppressive to the recipient.

This includes situations where repeated demands or criticisms, though minor in isolation, cumulatively undermine confidence, well-being, and health.

Harassment also constitutes a breach of CELT's Positive Parent Policy. Where any behaviour is extreme that it threatens the safety, wellbeing of stakeholders, the Trust will consider other options, such as reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action.

2.8 Complaint Campaigns

Where multiple complaints relate to the same issue, the Trust may issue a template response or publish a single statement on its website.

2.9 Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints may come from parents, pupils or members of the public; they should be considered as they may relate to something serious. The handling of such complaints will be left to the Headteacher, or Trust Leads to decide whether the gravity of an anonymous complaint



justifies investigation. If the Headteacher, or Trust Leads believes there could be any substance to the complaint they will investigate the matter and record the results of the investigation on file.



Appendix A: Stage 1 Complaint

Please complete this form and email it to complaints@celtrust.org

You may wish to complete this form online here: [Complaints Policy: Stage 1 – Fill out form](#)

Name:	Pupil Name:
Relationship to Pupil:	Preferred Contact (Tel/Email):
School:	Class / Form:

I wish to meet:

Brief Detail of the topic to be discussed, and why you are dissatisfied with any previous resolution attempts:

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?



Appendix B: Stage 2 Complaint

Please complete this form and email it to: complaints@celtrust.org

You may wish to complete this form online here: [Complaints Policy: Stage 2 – Fill out form](#)

Name:	Pupil Name:
Relationship to Pupil:	Preferred Contact (Tel/Email):
School:	Class / Form:

Please detail the aspects of the Stage 1 procedure or outcome you are dissatisfied with:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?



Appendix C: Stage 3 Complaint

Please complete this form and email it to: complaints@celtrust.org

You may wish to complete this form online here: [Complaints Policy: Stage 3 – Fill out form](#)

Name:	Pupil Name:
Relationship to Pupil:	Preferred Contact (Tel/Email):
School:	Class / Form:

Please detail the aspects of the Stage 2 procedure or outcome you are dissatisfied with:

Please detail which areas of the complaint you are requesting are further reviewed:

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

