



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Prime Tutors Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction and Guiding Principles

Prime Tutors is committed to providing outstanding provision and fostering strong, positive relationships with all stakeholders, including parents, carers, commissioners, and learners. This procedure ensures that any concerns or dissatisfaction regarding any aspect of our provision are addressed promptly, fairly, and confidentially.

Policy Aims:

1. To ensure all complaints are handled with fairness, openness, and transparency.
2. To achieve resolution quickly and effectively, encouraging dialogue and mutual understanding.
3. To prioritize the interests and well-being of the learner at all times.
4. To use feedback to inform policy review and continuous improvement of services.

Strategic Lead for Complaints:

The Directors, in consultation with the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), are the Strategic Leads responsible for overseeing the complaints procedure and ensuring alignment with all safeguarding duties.

2. Scope and Timeframes

Who Can Complain?

- Parents or Carers
- Commissioning Bodies or Referrers
- Learners (with appropriate support)
- Members of the Public

Timeframe for Submission:

Complaints should be made **within three months** of the incident or the final incident in a series. Exceptions to this timeline may be considered in extraordinary circumstances at the discretion of the Directors.

Complaints received outside term time will be acknowledged on the first working day following the holiday period.

3. Stages of the Complaints Procedure

Prime Tutors utilizes a three-stage process: Informal Resolution, Formal Complaint, and Appeal.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution (Preferred Initial Step)

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through direct communication with the staff member closest to the issue.

| Action | Details | Contact |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Raise the Concern | The complainant should first raise the concern with the relevant staff member or, preferably, the Learner's assigned Learning Manager. | Learning Manager (Contact details provided at learner induction) |
| Response | The staff member/Learning Manager will acknowledge the concern and attempt to resolve it through dialogue or minor corrective action. | Target: Within 48 hours (Where possible) |

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If the concern remains unresolved after Stage 1, or if the nature of the concern warrants immediate formal action (e.g., serious misconduct), the complaint should be submitted directly to the Director.

| Action | Details | Contact |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Submission | The complaint must be submitted in writing (email preferred), clearly stating the facts, desired resolution, and that it is a formal complaint. | Email: info@primetutorsnottingham.co.uk |
| Acknowledgement | The Director acknowledges receipt of the formal complaint. | Target: Within 5 school days |
| Investigation | The Director conducts a full investigation, which may involve interviewing relevant staff, reviewing documentation, and gathering evidence. | N/A |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Formal Response | The Director issues a formal written response outlining the investigation findings, whether the complaint is upheld (in whole or in part), and any actions taken or apologies offered. | Target: Within 10 school days of acknowledgement |
|------------------------|--|---|

Note: If the investigation requires more time, the complainant will be provided with an update and a revised timeline.

Stage 3: Appeal

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after receiving the formal response at Stage 2, they may request a review by the Director via the general enquiries channel.

| Action | Details | Contact |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Submission | The complainant must submit a written request for appeal, explaining why the Stage 2 outcome is unsatisfactory and detailing any procedural failures in the previous investigation. | Email: info@primetutorsnottingham.co.uk |
| Review | The Director conducts a final review of the case, focusing on the fairness and thoroughness of the Stage 2 investigation. | N/A |
| Final Decision | The Director issues the final decision of Prime Tutors regarding the complaint. | Target: Within 15 school days of receipt |

4. Specific Procedure for Low-Level Concerns and Safeguarding

Prime Tutors treats all concerns regarding staff behaviour with the utmost seriousness, especially those that may not meet the harm threshold but could indicate inappropriate conduct.

Definition:

A **Low-Level Concern** is defined as a concern about a staff member's behaviour that does not meet the harm threshold but may indicate inappropriate conduct.

- *Examples:* Being overly friendly with learners, inappropriate communication outside of work context, or repeatedly humiliating a learner.

Action and Escalation:

1. **Reporting:** Any low-level concern reported by staff, parents, or learners will be immediately brought to the attention of the Director and the Senior DSL.
2. **Internal Management:** The Directors, in consultation with the Senior DSL, will determine the appropriate response, which may include informal warnings, retraining, or monitoring.
3. **LADO Referral:** Where a pattern of low-level concerns or escalating behaviour is identified, or if the behaviour reaches the threshold for potential harm or abuse, a referral will be made immediately to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

5. Record-Keeping

A confidential record of all formal complaints, including outcomes and actions taken, will be maintained by the Director. This information is used for internal auditing and policy review, ensuring continuous service improvement.

6. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints are typically **not investigated**, as gathering evidence and confirming details is challenging. However, the Directors reserve the right to initiate an investigation into an anonymous complaint if the nature and seriousness of the concern relate to potential safeguarding risk.