



Policy	Reviewed	By whom?
Complaints	22/09/2025	Leon Edwards

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Introduction

Your views are welcomed. In the spirit of true partnership between home, Pushforward and the community, you are encouraged to say what you think should go on within Pushforward. Pushforward aims for high standards but sometimes things can go wrong or expectations are not met.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet which may be about an event that has happened, failed to happen or the way in which something was handled. The vast majority of concerns can be resolved informally. It is in everyone's best interests that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. This can usually be achieved through discussion and good communication. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, a formal procedure (as outlined in this policy) would then need to be followed when attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful.

The procedure described does not include complaints covered by a separate statutory procedure, for example: complaints about the National Curriculum; admission decisions; statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN); re-organisation procedures; matters likely to require a Child Protection investigation; pupil exclusions decisions; whistleblowing; staff grievances and procedures; complaints about services provided by other providers who may be linked to Pushforward. You should check which policy is relevant to your concern before proceeding with a complaint.

What can you expect?

- There are set response times for each stage of the complaints procedure.
- A complaint register should be maintained for formal complaints (see below).
- Conversations and correspondence should be handled with discretion, but you need to be aware that some information may have to be shared with others involved in the complaint procedure.
- Raising a concern or making a complaint should not affect the relationship between Pushforward and you or your child.
- When investigating your complaint Pushforward should talk to your child, witnesses and others involved quickly.
- Once investigations are complete the person making the complaint should receive a written response from Pushforward **within 20 days**.

Advice

Many concerns can be resolved quickly with goodwill, often by making early contact with the service lead, Leon Edwards (leon@pushforward.uk) Remember the more information you have the better able you will be to discuss the matter. Fact find by asking Pushforward for information. Obtain copies of relevant policies from Pushforward e.g. behaviour policy (including anti-bullying), SEND policy, health and safety policy etc. You can seek support from independent bodies such as Citizens Advice (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>), community relations centres and Advisory Centre for Education (<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>) etc.

Pushforward is a very busy service so please make an appointment for discussion through the Pushforward e-mail (listed above) It helps to outline the purpose and how long you think you may need to discuss your initial concerns. Cover all the relevant points but be as brief as you can. Avoid writing long letters or emails. Make it easy to read by using bullet points or headings. Include dates, times, names etc and explain clearly what your complaint is, what effect the issue is having on your child or you and what you would like to see happen. Keep it factual and avoid making judgements or hearsay. If more information is needed from you, the person investigating your complaint will contact you.

Complaint against a member of staff

The complaint procedure is distinct from any formal disciplinary proceedings for staff. If a complaint did result in a disciplinary procedure, then the complaint would be put on hold, and you should be advised of the delay and updated every three weeks. If a complaint is made against a member of staff, they will be informed and have the opportunity to respond.

Complaints/Appeals against assessment decisions (NEA and Controlled Assessment)

Pushforward is committed to ensuring that whenever it is tutors who assess students' work, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned.

However, to meet the requirements of the examination boards an internal appeals procedure is available. An appeal may only be made against the process that produced the grade or mark to be submitted to the examination board and not against the mark or grade, i.e. where the student or his parents believe that the procedures for managing and marking the assessment have not been carried out within the procedures set out above, or within the guidance of our own assessment policy.

Internal marking and assessment of student work will always be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. In addition, all marking and assessment is subject to internal verification and moderation.

How to complain

Raise your complaint with the member of staff responsible for the subject about which you are complaining. If the matter is not resolved, promptly or fully, a Manager will become involved to work with you and the individual or team to reach a satisfactory resolution. If you are not satisfied with how your complaint has been handled, you may begin the formal complaint procedure by putting the nature of your complaint in writing.

What will happen next?

- A Manager will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within 3 working days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
- A Manager will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve reviewing your complaint with others involved.
- A Manager will send you a written reply to your complaint, including suggestions for resolving the matter, with 20 working days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, a complaint can be made to the Head of Service for the Centre. This will then be dealt with in accordance with the organisation's complaint procedures.

Complaint Stages

Stage 1. Informal

Your expression of concern should be made to Pushforward at the earliest opportunity. First talk to the staff most closely concerned to clarify the facts and resolve through discussion. A request for discussion with the head of service or senior staff member may also be desirable before making a formal complaint.

Stage 2: Complaint

If you are not satisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 you may wish to make a formal complaint. This should be done in writing to the head of service. Your complaint should be acknowledged within three working days. The investigation should be carried out and the outcome communicated to you **within 20 working days**. The written response should include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it (if additional time is required to formulate a response this should be explained to you). Where appropriate the response should include what action Pushforward will take to resolve it.

The head of service may delegate the task of collating the information to another member of staff but not the decision on the action to be taken. Once a decision has been reached, the head of service should ensure that you are clear about the action taken and what to do if you remain dissatisfied (see below). If the complaint is about the head or service, the matter will be referred to our operational lead.

Stage 3: Final complaint stage

If all attempts to resolve the complaint have been unsuccessful, you may:

Request a panel hearing which will consist of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and one of which will be independent of the management and the running of the school.

Parent(s) can be accompanied to the panel hearing if they wish.

The findings and recommendations from the panel hearing will be provided to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about, the findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher.

You can also refer your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education at the Department for Education (DfE), Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT. For more information, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

The Secretary of State is unlikely to investigate individual issues but can inspect the Pushforward's policies and procedures and make sure these have been followed.

For further information, please contact leon@pushforward.uk

The Organisation retains a register of all complaints inc actions which is kept confidential but made available to the Secretary of state or a body conducting an inspection under Section 109 of the 2008 Act.