



Concerns and Complaints Companion Guide



Insignis
Academy Trust

A Parent's Guide to Sharing Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

Insignis Academy Trust (IAT) Companion Guide

Welcome to our quick companion guide.

At Insignis Academy Trust (IAT), we want to work closely with you to support your child's education. This guide is a simple version of our IAT Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Policy. It matches up with the national guidelines created by Parentkind, the Department for Education (DfE), and Ofsted.

Our goal is simple: to listen with care and solve any issues quickly and fairly. We will be very happy to hear positive feedback and the sharing of actions which have worked well.



What Kind of Issue Is It?

Before you get in touch, it helps to figure out what you need from the school. We group ideas into three categories using a clear system:

- **Feedback (You want to be heard):** You want to share your thoughts or ideas with us. You do not need a reply, but you want us to listen and take it on board.
- **Concern (You need an answer):** You have a worry or a doubt about something important and want to be reassured. We take these seriously and try to fix them informally within 15 school days.
- **Complaint (You need action):** You are unhappy with an action the school took (or failed to take) and want things put right.



Who Should You Speak To?

To get the fastest help, always try to talk to the person closest to your child's daily school life first.

- **First Step** (Class Teacher, Form Tutor or Year Raising Achievement Officer (RAO): Go here first for day-to-day things like homework, friendships, or classroom behaviour. They know your child best.
- **Second Step** (Head of Department, Head of Year or Senior Leader): If the teacher or Year RAO cannot fix it, or if the issue affects multiple classes (like serious bullying), speak to a school leader.
- **Third Step** (Headteacher or Head of School): Go here for major school issues, school policies, or if the earlier steps didn't solve the problem.

Important Note: Please do not approach individual school governors or trustees directly. They cannot act on their own, and if they get involved too early, it stops them from helping you if you need to appeal later on.



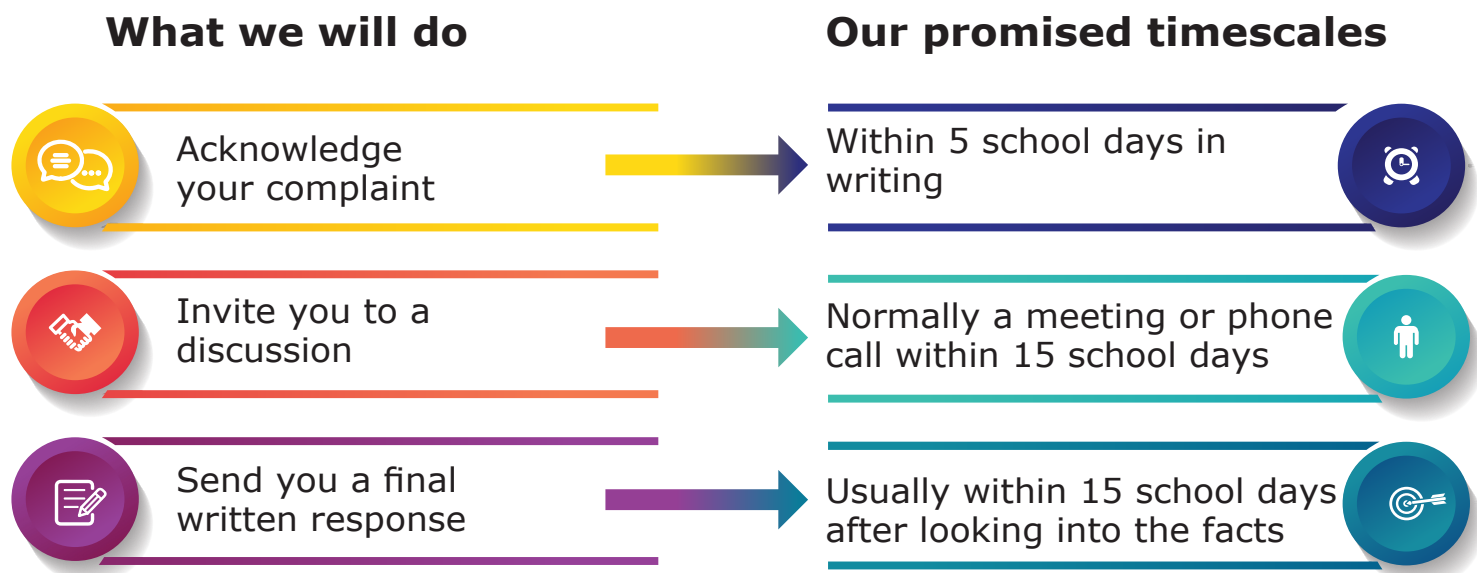
How to Raise an Issue Effectively

When you get in touch with us, following these simple tips will help us work together to find a solution:

- **Stick to the facts:** Write down or explain what happened, when it happened, and who was there. Keep your messages short and focused (aim for under two sides of A4 text, or about 1,000 words).
- **Be clear about the outcome:** Tell us what realistic action you would like the school to take to fix things. Keep in mind that some outcomes — like staff discipline or money payments — cannot be granted under this policy.
- **Do it quickly:** Please tell us within three months of the incident. We usually cannot look into older matters.
- **Use AI tools with care:** If you use tools like ChatGPT or Gemini to help structure your letter, make sure to check it thoroughly. AI can invent wrong details or reference laws that do not apply. Never type your child's name or private information into an AI tool.

Understanding the Formal Complaint Process

If an informal chat doesn't settle the issue, you can make a formal complaint in writing using the form found in the main policy (Appendix 3). Here is what you can expect from us:



What if you disagree with the decision?

If you are unhappy with the Head's final decision, you can, within 15 days of getting your response letter, ask for a Complaints Panel Hearing.

A panel of at least three people (including an independent person who does not run the school) will listen to your case. They will look at whether the school made the right decision based on the evidence. They will not re-investigate new complaints. We aim to hold this hearing within 20 school days of your request and write to you with the final decision within 5 school days after it ends.

Working Together: What We Expect

We promise to treat you with absolute respect, care, and courtesy, and we ask for the same in return. Tensions can run high when you are worried about your child, but certain actions make it harder to solve problems together:

- **Keep it private:** Please do not discuss details of your complaint or name staff members on social media while an investigation is happening. This protects everyone's privacy.
- **No aggressive behaviour:** Abusive, threatening, or harassing language towards staff, governors, or trustees will not be tolerated. If this happens, we may pause the complaint process or restrict how you can contact the school.
- **No vexatious or repeated complaints:** A complaint is considered "vexatious" if it is pursued in an unreasonable way, tries to cause deliberate disruption, or demands unrealistic outcomes (like asking for a member of staff to be fired). If you repeatedly bring up the exact same issue after we have already fully investigated and answered it, we will wrap up the process and stop replying to further messages about that matter.

At IAT, we believe that a strong partnership between parents and schools is what helps children thrive. We are fully committed to resolving your concerns openly, honestly, and positively.

For the complete details, full tables of who investigates specific complaints, and formal submission forms, please read the full [IAT Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Policy](#).



Visit our website www.insignis.org.uk for more information about IAT, our Governance and job vacancies.

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