



Feedback and Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

LDBS is committed to applying the same high standards to ourselves as we expect from schools, and to working in a transparent and accountable way.

Feedback and complaints are invaluable because they help us to learn and develop as an organisation and so to serve and support schools more effectively. We recognise that sometimes things go wrong, so feedback and complaints mean we can try to put things right.

This policy explains the way that we understand feedback and complaints, the way that external stakeholders can give feedback or make a complaint, and how LDBS will respond.

The policy is primarily about LDBS action or lack of action

This policy applies to:

- all LDBS employees, whether on full-time, part-time or zero hours contracts
- LDBS Trustees and GROW Directors
- consultants and contractors
- volunteers

For the avoidance of doubt, this includes everyone working for or on behalf of all LDBS subsidiaries, programmes and funds, including Teaching London: LDBS SCITT and Grow Education Partners.

If you want to complain about the action or lack of action of a Church school or another school in which LDBS is engaged, e.g., through placement of a SCITT trainee or through engagement with a GROW consultant, your complaint should be addressed in the first instance to the school, and it will be dealt with according to their complaints policy. In the unlikely event that the school is unable to resolve the issue, you can raise it with LDBS under this policy.

This policy meets the expectations set out in the [Good Practice Framework](#) for handling complaints in higher education.

2. Definitions

Feedback is information or opinion provided by stakeholders about LDBS action or lack of action. Feedback can be positive or negative. Feedback helps us to identify and build on helpful activities that make a positive difference, and to make changes to activities where improvement is needed. If something has gone wrong, feedback can provoke reflection and an opportunity to try to put things right.

A complaint is any spoken or written dissatisfaction about LDBS action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided for or on behalf of LDBS. Complaints are welcome because they provide an opportunity to try to put things right if they have gone wrong. They also provide an external perspective and so an opportunity to learn from what has happened.

3. Serious and urgent issues

If you are concerned about a serious or urgent safeguarding or criminal matter, please report it straight away outside of LDBS.

If your feedback or complaint is because you think someone has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, please contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the borough in which the concern arises.

If your feedback or complaint is because you think there may be criminal activity of some kind, please alert the Police.

4. Informal feedback and complaints

All our routine activities build in opportunities for you to tell us what you think, including the opportunity to make an informal complaint. There are opportunities that are spoken and written, public and private including:

4.1. Spoken

- Every clergy-headteacher network meeting includes an opportunity for feedback.
- LDBS operates an 'open door' policy. Staff are open to listening to feedback about any aspect of LDBS work during routine activity e.g., a school can raise a concern during a visit from a member of LDBS staff, a SCITT trainee can raise a concern with the SCITT Programme Director at any time.
- Asking a question or making a comment to the Director of Education at the annual report and presentation to Diocesan Synod.
- Asking a question or making a comment to the Director of Education and/ or LDBS Trustees at the annual Trustee meeting to which the Bishops' Council is invited.
- Regular meetings with representatives from Local Authorities, the Regional Director's Office, ESFA, the Church of England Education Office, Unions and Ofsted provide a wider perspective about LDBS activity.

4.2. Written

- The LDBS bulletin often invites feedback about particular issues e.g., a new policy, or an area in which LDBS is seeking to advocate for schools.
- There is always a questionnaire or survey for feedback at the end of training and other activities provided by LDBS and/ or Grow Education Partners. This can be about the specific activity or any other issue.
- There is a dedicated email address for feedback that relates to building projects delivered under the School Condition Allocation scheme.
- There are multiple places where written feedback can be provided via the [LDBS website](#), and the website also includes contact information for contacting individual members of staff.

Wherever possible we resolve complaints and respond to negative feedback in an informal, relational way that provides a fair resolution and allows us to learn from the experience.

If you are providing written comments and would like a response, please tell us your name and contact details and we will provide an initial response within 15 working days.

Depending on the nature of the issue this may include a written response, a telephone call and/ or an informal virtual or in-person meeting. The meeting will provide opportunities to identify and explore problems and concerns and potential ways to resolve the issue. The aim is to reach a resolution that benefits the diocesan family of Church schools, and every effort will be made to resolve matters informally through dialogue.

5. Making a formal complaint

Our experience is that the majority of issues can be resolved informally. If informal options are exhausted and you are not satisfied with the response, you can make a formal written complaint.

Address your complaint to Penny Roberts MBE, Diocesan Director of Education (DDE), 36 Causton St, London, SW1P 4AU, penny.roberts@london.anglican.org.

If your complaint relates to the DDE, please write to The Rt Revd Dr Joanne Grenfell, Bishop of Stepney, Chair of the Board (Chair) through the Clerk clerk@london.anglican.org.

Your email or letter should set out:

1. Your name
2. If the complaint is made on behalf of an organisation, the name of the organisation
3. Brief details about the circumstances giving rise to your complaint (the subject matter, dates, who was involved, your role and our role)
4. Brief details of the outcome that you would like to see to resolve your complaint
5. Your contact details

The DDE (or Chair as appropriate) will write to you to confirm that they will undertake a formal investigation and will respond as soon as possible. We would expect any investigation and response to be complete within 28 working days, but we will let you know if there are reasons why it will take longer.

6. Appealing against the outcome of the formal complaint

Following the conclusion of the investigation, an appeal can be made if you believe that a procedural irregularity or administrative error has occurred. If this is the case, you should write to the DDE (or Chair as appropriate) within 28 days of receiving the response, explaining why you believe that there has been a procedural irregularity or administrative error and asking for it to be referred to a committee of trustees who have not previously been involved in the complaint (the “Complaints Panel”).

The Complaints Panel will meet as soon as is practical to review the paperwork and give you the opportunity to present your case in person. This will usually be within 28 days of receiving your letter. The decision of the Complaints Panel will be given in writing within 10 working days of the conclusion of the review by the Panel. Their decision is final.

If a Teaching London: LDBS SCITT trainee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Complaints Panel, the trainee has 12 months to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if they wish.

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