Complaints Policy – Review Sept 2027

1. Policy Statement

Bespoke Training and Education is committed to delivering high-quality alternative education provision. We value feedback and take all concerns seriously. This policy sets out how students, parents/carers, professionals, and other stakeholders can raise concerns or complaints and how we will respond.

We aim to resolve complaints fairly, promptly, and transparently.

This policy has been written to meet Part 7 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Department for Education's best practice guidance for school complaints procedures, and Ofsted's education inspection framework (in use from November 2025). It is shared with parents/carers at the start of every placement. We will make reasonable adjustments so that students and parents/carers with SEND or additional needs can raise a concern.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:
• Students
• Parents and carers
• Local authority professionals or referring agencies
• Members of the public
• Partner organisations and stakeholders

It does not cover:
• Appeals against exclusions
• Child protection or safeguarding concerns (see Safeguarding Policy)
• Issues covered by other policies (e.g. staff grievances)
• Data protection requests or concerns (see Data Protection Policy)
• Complaints about a commissioning school or local authority's own decisions (these should be made to that organisation)

Any safeguarding concern raised as part of a complaint will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and dealt with under the Safeguarding Policy before the complaint continues.

3. Guiding Principles

• We handle complaints objectively and without bias.
• Complaints will be investigated with respect for all parties involved.
• We aim to resolve issues at the earliest possible stage.
• We ensure confidentiality and adhere to data protection regulations.
• All parties are treated with dignity and fairness throughout the process.
• No student, parent/carer or member of the public will be treated less favourably because they have raised a concern or complaint.
• Students may raise a complaint themselves and can be supported by a trusted adult or advocate; their views will be listened to and taken seriously.
• "Working days" means Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays and periods when the provision is closed. Where a timescale cannot be met, we will write to the complainant to explain why and give a new date.
• Complaints should normally be raised within 3 months of the matter concerned. Later complaints will be considered where there is good reason for the delay.

4. Stages of the Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Many concerns can be resolved quickly and informally by speaking with a staff member.
• How to raise it: In person, by telephone or in writing (including email).
• Who to contact: Usually the key worker, tutor, or designated contact person.
• Expected timeframe: Within 5 working days of the concern being raised.
• A brief note of the concern and the outcome will be kept.

If unresolved or if the complainant is dissatisfied, they may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

To make a formal complaint, the complainant must submit it in writing (letter or email).

Send to:
Graham Coffey

Bespoke Training and Education
bespoke.te@gmail.com

07966436671

If the complaint is about Graham Coffey, it should be sent to Brandon Hitchman – brandon.te@gmail..com, who will handle it in his place.

• Acknowledgement will be sent within 3 working days.
• The complaint will be investigated by a senior member of staff or manager not directly involved in the issue.
• The complainant may be invited to a meeting to discuss the complaint and may bring a friend, relative or advocate.

• A written response will be issued within 15 working days.
• The response will set out the findings, the reasons for them, any action to be taken, and how to request a panel hearing at Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review.
• The request must be made within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.
• The request should be made in writing to the contact in Section 8, stating why the complainant remains dissatisfied.
• The hearing will be held before a panel of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
• At least one panel member will be independent of the management and running of Bespoke Training and Education.
• The hearing will normally take place within 20 working days of the request. The complainant will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the date, and all papers will be shared with them in advance.
• The complainant may attend the hearing and be accompanied if they wish (for example by a friend, relative or advocate). Legal representation is not normally necessary.
• If the complainant chooses not to attend, the panel may consider the complaint on the written evidence.
• The panel may uphold the complaint in whole or in part, or dismiss it, and may make recommendations.
• The panel's written findings and recommendations will be sent within 5 working days of the hearing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy will be kept and made available for inspection on the premises by the proprietor and the headteacher/centre manager.
• The panel's decision is the final stage of the internal complaints procedure.

5. Unreasonable Complaints

Bespoke Training and Education reserves the right to manage unreasonable, persistent, or vexatious complaints. This may include limiting communication methods or escalating to legal advisors where appropriate. Any such decision will be explained to the complainant in writing and reviewed regularly. A complaint that has completed all stages of this procedure will not be reopened unless new and relevant information is provided.

6. Record Keeping

• All formal complaints are logged and retained securely.
• Records include the nature of the complaint, investigation, outcome, and any actions taken.
• A written record is kept of every complaint made at Stage 2, stating whether it was resolved at the formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing, and the action taken as a result (whether or not the complaint was upheld).
• Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection (such as Ofsted) requests access to them.
• The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding

school year is made available to parents/carers on request.
• Complaint records are retained in line with our Data Protection and Records Retention policies.
• Complaint records are reviewed to identify trends and improve practice.

7. External Referrals

If a complaint remains unresolved after the internal process, the complainant may escalate it to the relevant external body, such as:

- Local Authority (for commissioned placements)
- Department for Education (DfE) – for complaints that the provision has not met the required standards or has not followed this procedure (the DfE took over the functions of the former Education and Skills Funding Agency in March 2025)
- Ofsted (for quality or safeguarding concerns) – Ofsted does not resolve individual complaints but may use the information to inform inspection
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (for data protection concerns)
- Qualifications Awarding Body

Contact information for escalation can be provided on request.

8. Contact Details - Complaints

Graham Coffey

Bespoke Training and Education
bespoke.te@gmail.com

9. Monitoring and Review

• The proprietor/Director reviews the complaints log at least termly to check that timescales are met, identify patterns, and make sure lessons learned improve the quality of education, behaviour, attendance, personal development and safeguarding.
• Where relevant, outcomes and learning are shared with commissioning schools and local authorities.
• This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, DfE guidance or Ofsted requirements change.