



Gateways Education & Wellbeing Ltd

Paving the Way to Success



Gateways
Alternative Provision
Learning your way



Gateways Tuition
Confidence through learning

Complaints Policy

Policy owner:	Director / Registered Person
Complaints lead:	Director / nominated Complaints Manager
Approved by:	Director / Leadership Team
Date approved:	21/04/2026
Review date:	21/04/2027
Applies to:	Children and young people, parents/carers, commissioners, partner schools, staff, contractors and other stakeholders

1. Purpose

Gateways Education and Wellbeing Limited is committed to providing a high-quality, safe and supportive service. We welcome feedback and take concerns seriously. This policy explains how children and young people, parents/carers, commissioners, partner schools and others can raise concerns or make a complaint, and how Gateways will respond fairly, promptly and transparently.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints relating to Gateways provision, including tuition, education and wellbeing sessions, EOTAS packages, reintegration and outreach support, and provision delivered on site, in schools, in the community or in the home where commissioned.

This policy does not replace safeguarding procedures. Any matter that suggests a child may be at risk of harm will be dealt with under Gateways' safeguarding procedures and may run alongside the complaints process.

3. Key principles

- complaints will be handled respectfully, fairly and without discrimination;
- information will be handled confidentially and in line with data protection law;
- concerns will be acknowledged and addressed within clear timescales;
- investigations will be proportionate, evidence-based and transparent; and
- lessons learned will be used to improve practice.

4. Legal and guidance framework

This policy reflects relevant legal and regulatory expectations, including:

- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR;
- the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments to the complaints process where needed;
- Department for Education best-practice guidance on complaints procedures; and
- where applicable to the service complained about, Ofsted and Independent School Standards expectations on complaints handling, complaint records and findings.

5. Definitions

Concern: an issue raised informally that may be resolved quickly without a formal investigation.

Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction requiring investigation and a formal response.

Working day: Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.

6. How to raise a concern or complaint

Concerns or complaints may be raised verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. Written complaints are encouraged where possible, as they help Gateways investigate fully and keep a clear record.

Where possible, the complainant should include their name, relationship to the child or young person if relevant, what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved, any supporting evidence, and the outcome sought.

7. Timescales

- Written complaints will normally be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt.

- Stage 1 concerns will usually be responded to within 5 to 10 working days where feasible.
- Stage 2 formal complaints will normally receive a full written response within 20 working days of the complaint being accepted at Stage 2.
- If more time is needed because of complexity, staff absence or the need to gather further evidence, Gateways will explain why and provide a revised target date.
- Where a relevant Ofsted childcare requirement applies to the provision complained about, findings and any action taken will be provided as soon as reasonably possible and in any event within 28 days, and complaint records will be kept for 3 years.

8. Complaints process

8.1 Stage 1 - Informal resolution

The complainant should raise the matter with the session lead, tutor or most relevant member of staff. Gateways will listen, clarify the issue and seek to resolve the matter quickly where possible.

8.2 Stage 2 - Formal complaint

If the matter is unresolved, or is too serious for informal handling, the complaint should be submitted to the Director, Registered Person or nominated Complaints Manager. The investigation may include reviewing records and communications, speaking with staff and, where appropriate, hearing from the child or young person and/or parent or carer.

The formal outcome will set out the complaint, the findings, whether it is upheld, partially upheld or not upheld, any actions taken or planned, and how to request a review.

8.3 Stage 3 - Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review within 10 working days of the Stage 2 response. The review will be carried out by an appropriate senior person not previously involved where feasible. Where independence is required or appropriate, Gateways may seek external or independent input to support fairness. The Stage 3 decision is final within Gateways.

9. Confidentiality, records and data protection

Information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate and respond. Complaint records will be stored securely and handled in line with data protection law. Gateways will maintain a complaints log recording the complaint received, steps taken, outcome and any follow-up actions.

10. Safeguarding concerns

If a complaint includes an allegation or information indicating that a child may be at risk of harm, Gateways will treat this as a safeguarding concern, notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and follow safeguarding procedures, including external referral where required. Child safety will always take priority over the complaint process.

11. Accessibility and support

Gateways will make reasonable adjustments so the complaints process is accessible. This may include accepting verbal complaints, arranging meetings, allowing an advocate or supporter to attend, or providing information in an accessible format.

12. Escalation outside Gateways

Where relevant, complainants may also raise concerns with Ofsted about an Ofsted-registered provider. Concerns about the handling of personal data may be raised with the Information Commissioner's Office.

13. Monitoring and review

Complaints will be reviewed periodically to identify themes, lessons learned and improvements to practice. This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance or Gateways' delivery model changes.

14. Policy approval

Approved by: CARLY MASON

Role: Director / Registered Person

Date: 21/04/2026

Next review due: 21/04/2027