COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE 2025–2026

Organisation: Manchester Top Team Youth Project (MTTYP) – Alternative Provision

Reviewed: 1 September 2025 | **Next Review:** 1 September 2026

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Daryl-Anne Baguley – 07523 983890

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): George Smith – 07728 793456

1. Statement of Intent & Principles

MTTYP welcomes feedback from students, parents/carers, commissioning schools, local authorities, and members of the community. We view complaints as an opportunity to listen, reflect, and improve the quality of our alternative provision.

We aim to resolve concerns promptly, fairly, and informally wherever possible. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly, objectively, and confidentially without prejudice to the young person's placement or treatment.

2. Scope & Safeguarding Exclusions

This policy applies to all general complaints regarding MTTYP provision, sessional mentoring, staff conduct, or administration.

- **Safeguarding Complaints Exclusion:** Any concern or complaint that involves a child protection issue, abuse disclosure, or an allegation against a staff member will **not** be managed under this general complaints procedure. It will be escalated immediately under our *Safeguarding & Prevent Policy* or *Policy for Managing Allegations Against Staff & Low-Level Concerns*, involving the LADO and local authority pathways where appropriate.

3. Time-Bound Three-Stage Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Resolution (5 Working Days)
├── Discuss concern directly with Mentor or DSL/DDSL
└── Aim to resolve informally within 5 working days

Stage 2: Formal Written Complaint (10 Working Days)
├── Submit formal written complaint to Executive Management
├── Written acknowledgement within 2 working days
└── Full formal investigation and written response within 10 working days

Stage 3: Independent Panel Hearing (20 Working Days)
├── Appeal written response to Board of Trustees / Governors
└── Independent Panel Hearing convened within 20 working days

3.1 Stage 1: Informal Resolution (Target: Within 5 Working Days)

- **Initial Contact:** Most concerns can be resolved quickly through informal discussion. Complainants are encouraged to speak directly to the student's primary mentor, **DSL Daryl-Anne Baguley**, or **DDSL George Smith**.
- **Outcome:** The staff member will listen, investigate the matter informally, and propose a practical resolution within **5 working days**. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may escalate to Stage 2.

3.2 Stage 2: Formal Written Complaint (Target: Within 10 Working Days)

- **Submitting the Complaint:** If informal resolution fails or the matter is serious, the complainant must submit a formal written Complaint Form to Executive Management.
- **Acknowledgement:** MTTYP will formally acknowledge receipt of the written complaint in writing within **2 working days**.
- **Investigation:** An appointed Investigating Officer (who has had no prior direct involvement in the matter) will conduct a thorough investigation, including interviewing relevant staff or reviewing session logs.
- **Formal Response:** A comprehensive written response detailing the findings, conclusions, and any corrective actions taken will be sent to the complainant within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 complaint.

3.3 Stage 3: Independent Panel Hearing (Target: Within 20 Working Days)

- **Requesting an Appeal:** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Stage 2 formal response, they may request an Appeal Panel Hearing within **5 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 decision.
- **Panel Composition:** The Board of Trustees will convene an Independent Panel consisting 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 MTTYP.
- **Hearing Timeline:** The Panel Hearing will be convened within **20 working days** of receiving the appeal request. The complainant may be accompanied by a friend or representative.
- **Final Findings:** The Panel's written findings and recommendations will be issued to the complainant, Executive Management, and the commissioning school within **5 working days** following the hearing. The Panel's decision is final.

4. External Escalation Routes

If a commissioning school, parent, or local authority remains dissatisfied following the completion of Stage 3, they may contact external regulatory bodies:

- **Local Authority AP Lead / Commissioning Body:** Direct escalation to the referring school or LA Officer.
- **Department for Education (DfE) / Ofsted:** Direct contact via the gov.uk complaints portal.

5. Recording & Confidentiality

- A central, confidential **Complaints Log** is maintained by Executive Management, tracking all formal written complaints, investigation stages, and outcomes.

- All records are kept confidential in accordance with UK GDPR and our *Data Protection & GDPR Policy*.