

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Updated July 2024

1. Statement of Intent

This Procedure is a general complaints procedure. For any concern regarding the safeguarding of children and child protection, the complainant will refer to the procedure included in MathsMakers Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

- At MathsMakers, the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers work together to foster Inclusion and ensure that pupils, their parents and other individuals as well as schools/agencies are satisfied with the services provided, treated fairly and listened to.
- MathsMakers ensures it is responsive to concerns related to its activities, as part of its commitment to maintaining and improving standards of service delivery.
- MathsMakers provides all service users involved in its work a clearly defined process for addressing concerns related to its services and resolving problems as they arise.
- If required, MathsMakers arranges for an interpreter.
- The Complaints Procedure can be made readily available to all users on request.

2. General Principles

- This procedure is designed to ensure that, wherever possible, an “informal resolution” is attempted either at staff/volunteer or line management level.
- The intention of this procedure is to be investigatory, not adversarial, with a focus on a positive resolution for all concerned.
- To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of MathsMakers as soon as possible. Matters raised more than one month after the event being complained of will not be considered, except in very exceptional circumstances.
- Parents, pupils and staff from schools/agencies should use the following procedure from *Step One*.
- Representatives of outside agencies and individuals who are not MathsMakers service users should use the following procedure from *Step Two*.
- Anyone else with a complaint regarding a MathsMakers instructor or director should use the following procedure from *Step Three*.

- For a complaint to be investigated, complainants need to follow both the process and the timescale outlined in this procedure.
- Investigation of any complaint or review request will begin within 5 working days of its receipt, save in exceptional circumstances.
- The investigation shall be completed as soon as reasonably practicable. In general this will be within 10 to 15 working days, save in exceptional circumstances.
- An anonymous complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- Any complaint that does not follow the procedure and/or is vexatious or spurious to the staff or volunteer or director will not be dealt with. The complainant will receive a letter to that effect, advising him or her to follow the procedure in letter and tone.

3. The Procedure

Step One

- The Purpose of this first step is to try to resolve any matter directly and informally.
- The complainant should, in the first instance, take any concern to the MathsMakers member of staff/volunteer and request a meeting. She/he will always endeavour to meet with the individual about any issue and seek a satisfactory resolution. This can involve subsequent meetings.
- If a concern is considered complex, the Executive Director, Helena Mullins (email: hmullins@mathsmakers.org; mobile: 07816 916538), may be involved.

Step Two

- If the complainant feels he/she cannot speak directly with the MathsMakers member of staff/volunteer, or has tried and failed, he/she may arrange to speak with the Executive Director, Helena Mullins (the director). In this meeting, the complainant needs to tell the director:
 - what led to the problem
 - what the complainant has done so far about it
 - what the complainant would like to happen next.
- If the complainant needs help to make a complaint, he/she is welcome to take a friend or representative with him/her or ask a friend or representative to represent the complainant.
- MathsMakers will be happy to speak or correspond with the complainant representative once they have the permission from the complainant.

- To help with the process, the complainant will be asked to fill in the MathsMakers Complaints Form (see Appendix) which is readily available on request. Otherwise, the director will fill the form with the complainant during the meeting. After agreeing that the notes are an accurate account of the complaint, the complainant will be asked to sign the form.
- Following the meeting, the director will make enquiries in an effort to establish the facts and propose a resolution.
- The director will give his/her response, in writing, within 10 to 15 working days maximum.

Step Three

- If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of the complaint or if the complaint is regarding a MathsMakers director, the complainant or the complainant's representative may write to the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- The Chair will investigate the matter as soon as possible and collect all evidence. The Chair may require a formal meeting with the member of staff/volunteer, against whom the complaint has been raised, to clarify some issues. The member of staff/volunteer may be accompanied by a friend or a representative. The meeting will be minuted.
- The Chair may, if she/he finds it appropriate, request to meet with the complainant and the complainant's representative to try to resolve the matter. This meeting will be minuted.
- The Chair will inform the complainant, in writing, of his/her decision within 15 working days. The letter will summarise the complaint and outline the investigation process. It will not contain details of the investigation nor of any procedure affecting the member of staff concerned.
- The Chair's response will include a statement informing the complainant that this concludes any process related to the investigation of the complaint. It will also inform the complainant on his/her right to appeal.

4. Appeal Process and Independent Arbitration

The complainant will only be able to appeal if:

- he/she can prove that the investigation process was not followed properly
- he/she has evidence that proves the conclusion reached is unfair
- he/she has evidence that was not considered in the investigation and would change its conclusion
- he/she has evidence that proves the investigation did not adhere to MathsMakers Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

The Appeal Panel

If the complainant appeals, this will be dealt with by an Appeal Panel.

The Appeal Panel will comprise two MathsMakers representatives who have not been involved in any stage of the complaint process so far, and an independent arbiter. The independent arbiter for MathsMakers is Masumah Mojaddedi (email: masumah@paiwand.com; mobile: 07366 412640). The Board of Directors will nominate a director as Chair of the Appeal Panel.

Appeal Procedure

- The complainant will have 5 working days from receiving the final response from the Chair of the Board of Directors, to write a letter to the Chair of the Appeal Panel stating clearly on which grounds (see above) the complainant wishes to appeal as well as providing all information and evidence for doing so.
- The Chair of the Appeal Panel will convene the Panel to undertake the review. The Chair will inform the complainant that his/her request has been received and the Chair will also inform the manager / Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors that an Appeal has been requested and this within 5 working days from receiving the complainant's request.
- The Appeal Panel will first examine the written evidence and consider whether it is necessary to meet with the complainant. This meeting will be minuted.
- If the Appeal Panel asks the complainant to meet with them in order to clarify and/or expand on the information received, they will do so in writing and the meeting will take place within 5 working days of receiving the Panel's letter. The complainant may be accompanied by a friend or a representative. This meeting will be minuted.
- The Appeal Panel will then inform the Chair of the Board of Directors of the content of the Appeal and ask her/him to make a written response supported by description and evidence of the process followed and facts leading to her/his conclusion including dates and a copy of relevant correspondence and/or records (if necessary). This should be provided within 5 working days so far as practicable.
- The Appeal Panel may ask to meet the Chair of the Board of Directors to clarify and/or expand on the information received. This meeting will take place within 5 working days. This meeting will be minuted.
- The Chair of the Appeal Panel will inform the complainant and the Chair of the Board of Directors, in writing, of the outcome of the review, within 3 to 5 working days of the Panel reaching their conclusion.
- The Appeal Panel's conclusion will be final and the matter will be closed.

Next Review: July 2025

Adopted by the Board of Directors

Signed: Helena Mullins

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helena Mullins".

Date: 5/7/2024

Appendix - MathsMakers Complaints Form

Date:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Mobile:

Nature of the Complaint:

Please describe whether this complaint relates to a specific incident or is a more general complaint.

Date of the incident:

Who was involved:

Where it took place:

What you have done about your complaint so far:

Names of any persons contacted about the complaint:

Dates when have you made those contacts:

Account of the outcomes of those meetings (if any):

Account of anything else you have done or suggested regarding your complaint:

Accounts of any outcomes of your actions:

Please indicate what would you like to see happen about your complaint:

Signed _____

Date: _____