

Have Your Say

Compliments & Complaints Procedure

This information can be made available in alternative formats:

Electronic format
Large font Easy
Read

If you would like more information about any part of the complaints process, please contact Head Office, telephone 01909 506678, who will be happy to help.

You can find information about services provided by Autism East Midlands on our website at: www.autismeastmidlands.org.uk

Your feedback is important to us.

We want the services we provide to be the best they can be and this is why your feedback is important to us. It enables us to listen, respond and improve.

You may feel unhappy with a service that you receive or you may want to make a suggestion that helps us improve it. We also hope there are times when we do something well.

Compliments

We are pleased to receive compliments. It is always good to know that what we do is appreciated and to hear about positive experiences. This helps us to know how well we perform, to say thank you to the staff concerned and to continuously improve the quality of our services. We will record and respond to all compliments and feed back to the appropriate member of staff as well as to inform our senior managers and Board. We can also use compliments to share good practice within our organisation.

Complaints

We realise that sometimes things go wrong. From time to time, an individual may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of his or her dealings or experience with Autism East Midlands and when this happens, it is important that the issue is dealt with as quickly as possible.

We recognise that everyone has the right to make a complaint and, as an organisation that strives for continuous improvement, we can learn valuable lessons from them.

How to make your compliment or complaint

You can make a compliment or a complaint in a number of ways. You can:

Telephone: 01909 506678

Email: enquiries@autismeastmidlands.org.uk

You can **complete the form at the back of this Guide.**

You can **write a letter to:**

The Chief Executive
Unit 31
Crags Industrial
Estate Morven
Street Worksop
Nottinghamshire
S80 4AJ

You can **ask any member of staff** to record your compliment or complaint.

The objectives of our **Compliments and Complaints Policy** are to ensure that:

1. compliments and complaints are dealt with efficiently
2. complaints are properly investigated
3. complainants are treated with courtesy and respect
4. complainants receive:
 - (i) help to enable them to understand the procedure in relation to complaints
 - (ii) advice on where they can get help
 - (iii) a timely and appropriate response
 - (iv) complainants are told the outcome of the investigation of their complaint
 - (v) action is taken if necessary following the outcome of the complaint.

All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated fairly and sensitively.

On all occasions, complainants should be reassured that their complaint will be considered objectively and constructively and that they will not receive any form of prejudicial treatment or victimisation as a result of their complaint.

All service users have the right to advocacy support in making a complaint.

Procedure:

All procedures will be made available using a variety of mediums such as hard copy, web pages, Easy Read, or in any required font size. An Easy Read **Have Your Say Guide** is also available on Autism East Midlands's website.

Informal Complaints:

Most concerns can be dealt with informally by discussing with the person directly involved.

Complaints in the first instance should be reported to the relevant manager for each service. If that individual is the subject of the complaint, any other manager can be contacted.

If the issue cannot be informally resolved, a formal complaint may be made.

Formal Complaints:

Stage 1

Formal complaints will be logged by the Chief Executives Personal Assistant and sent to the appropriate Manager, who will respond to you within 5 working days and indicate a timescale for your complaint to be investigated.

They will then look into the matter and aim to answer your concerns within 3 weeks.

The person who is investigating your concerns will firstly aim to establish the facts. The extent of the investigation will depend on how complex and how serious the issues you have raised are. The person investigating your complaint will keep you updated regularly with their progress.

In some cases, you may be invited to discuss your concerns personally.

Outcome

If we formally investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what went wrong and why it happened.

If we find that there is a fault in our systems or in the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things, to stop it happening again.

If we didn't do something well, we will apologise and aim to put it right. At this stage, if you are not happy with our response, the procedure moves to Stage 2.

Stage 2

If you are not happy with the response at Stage 1, your complaint will be passed to a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will oversee a further investigation of your concerns.

The timescales will be similar, with initial acknowledgement of your complaint within 5 days and the aim of a full response within 3 weeks. Responses to complaints will normally be made in writing.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2 of the formal procedure, you will be given details of the relevant Sponsoring authority.

If your complaint is about SHS Braithwell we follow the Independent School Standards.

Under these standards if you remain unhappy with the response AEM will arrange a panel to offer parents an opportunity to have their complaint heard independently of the earlier decision making and school management. We will not normally accept a complaint to panel if it comes more than one month after the stage 2 outcome. We would take into consideration any exceptional circumstances in making this decision.

The panel will comprise three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the running and management of the school (The member should not only be outside the school's workforce, and not a member of governing body/proprietary body, but also should not be otherwise involved with the management of the school).

Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish (The panel hearing does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf at the hearing).

The date of the panel meeting will take into account the availability of the parents or carers as well as the school and will take place within 30 days.

Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish (The panel hearing does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf at the hearing).

The panel will hear the complaint and will hear the outcome of the school's investigations and its response to these. The panel will then make findings and recommendations which will be communicated in writing within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing to the Proprietor, Regional Director, the Headteacher, the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the person complained about.

If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, the panel will meet in line with this policy. The school's arrangements for the panel hearing will be reasonable in order to facilitate the parent(s) exercising the right of attendance.

A written record of all complaints and their resolution, whether they proceeded to a panel hearing or not, will be kept on the school premises by the Headteacher (Equality Act 2010) and made available to the Proprietor and Ofsted inspectors on request. The school will record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. These records and any correspondence relating to a complaint will remain confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the Education Act 2002 requests access to the records.

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be published on the school website.

For all complaints

If further recourse is required, after all these pathways have been exhausted, the Local Government Ombudsman can be contacted at the address below. Their role includes handling complaints about adult social care providers. The Ombudsman expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us the chance to put things right.

The Local Government
Ombudsman PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

Telephone 0300 061 0614 or 0845 602 1983

Learning Lessons

We take your compliments and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. Where there is a need for change, we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do and when we plan to do it by.

Thank you for your feedback.

Document Control Title: Have Your Say – Compliments & Complaints Procedure

Applicable To: All

Date Last Reviewed: November 2025

Date of next review: November 2026

Procedure Owner: HR

Compliment or Complaint Form

Autism East Midlands aims to provide high quality services for our learners, service users, their families and other stakeholders. We welcome feedback to help us to improve what we do. Please complete this form, including as much information as possible.

Your contact details

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Email	
Telephone	

Representative or Supporter contact details (if applicable)

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Email	
Telephone	

Which is the best way to contact you?

Letter ☐ Email ☐ Telephone ☐

What is the nature of the feedback?

Compliment ☐ Complaint ☐

Name of the service area

School ☐ Day ☐
Residential ☐ Other* ☐

*Please specify

Details of your compliment or complaint

If this is a complaint, please answer the following: Have tried to resolve the issue informally?

- Yes☐
- No☐

Have you raised this concern before?

- Yes☐
- No☐

If yes, please can you give us brief details of how and when?

What do you think should be done to put things right?

Date

We value your feedback and are happy to respond to you. However, if you do not wish to receive a response, please tick here: ☐

Please note that all Autism East Midlands staff are under an obligation not to allow a complaint by a student or service user, or their families to have any bearing on the way they are treated.

Please send this form to:

The Chief Executive
Feedback
Unit 31
Crags Industrial
Estate Morven
Street Worksop
Nottinghamshire
S80 4AJ

Email: enquiries@autismeastmidlands.org.uk