Atlantic Academy and Bideford College

Worried or concerned about something at school?

Most worries and concerns are sorted quickly by talking to us. If not, here is what happens next and how long each step takes.

	WHAT YOU DO	WHAT WE DO
1	**Talk to us** Speak to your child's class teacher or form tutor, in person, by phone or by email. Not sure who to ask? Contact the school office.	We will listen and try to put things right. Most things are sorted within **15 school days**.
	↓ **Still not sorted?**	
2	**Make a formal complaint in writing** Fill in the complaint form. You can get it from the school office or website. Send it to the head teacher or principal. Is it about the head teacher, principal or the trust? Email **governance@athenalearningtrust.uk**	Tell you we have it within **5 school days**. Offer you a meeting within **15 school days**. Send you our decision in writing, usually within **15 school days**.
	↓ **Not happy with our decision? Ask within 15 school days.**	
3	**Ask for a complaints committee hearing** Fill in the request form and email it to **governance@athenalearningtrust.uk**. Tell us why you are not happy with our decision and what would put it right.	Tell you we have it within **5 school days**. Hold a hearing, usually within **20 school days**, with at least three people who have not been involved. Write to you with the decision within **5 school days** of the hearing. This is our final stage.
	↓ **Think we did not follow the process properly?**	
4	**Contact the Department for Education** Go to **gov.uk/complain-to-dfe**	They check we handled your complaint properly. They cannot change our decision.

Tips that help

- Raise it as soon as you can. We usually cannot look at things from more than three months ago.
- Tell us what happened, what has been done so far and what would put it right.
- Keep it short: no more than two sides of A4.
- You can bring a friend, relative or interpreter to any meeting.
- Please keep it off social media while we look into it.

Need help?

The school office can help you write it down or give you this guide in another format. Citizens Advice can help too.

School days are days the school is open to pupils. Weekends and holidays do not count.

Some things have their own process, such as admissions, suspensions and exclusions, data requests and SEN assessments. Ask the school office.

Worried about a child's safety? Tell the school straight away. Do not wait for this process.