



*Enabling all to flourish
rooted in God's love*

Trust Data Protection Complaints Policy

Policy type	Trust wide (Tier 1)
Review	Every two years
Author/Responsible Officer	DSAMAT Data Manager
Approved by	Trust Board
Date of ratification	July 2026
Date of next review	July 2028

This policy is a mandatory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented without any amendments

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OUR POLICY STATEMENT

'Enabling all to flourish rooted in God's love'

JOHN 10:10

Our Trust's mission is to ensure that all pupils are enabled to flourish; academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally, rooted in God's Love. This belief is central to our vision and our work in service of our communities, pupils, staff and families and is rooted in our Christian Foundation. Our policies are underpinned by our Trust and Schools Christian Visions, serving a range of different contexts and school communities.

Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is recognised within our policies and procedures and ensures that we are governed by principles that are guided by the central belief of prospering, thriving and growing for all. Our policies are based on the belief that equitable treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is essential for ensuring holistic flourishing for all. Each policy is developed collaboratively and draws upon and is informed by the National Church of England Vision and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision. Our policies are adapted to recognise the individuality of each school and its community.

Our policies provide clear expectations for all Trust colleagues and ensures a consistency of approach across our schools and that we are living out our Trust values of Hope, Nurture, Equality, Respect and Collaboration.

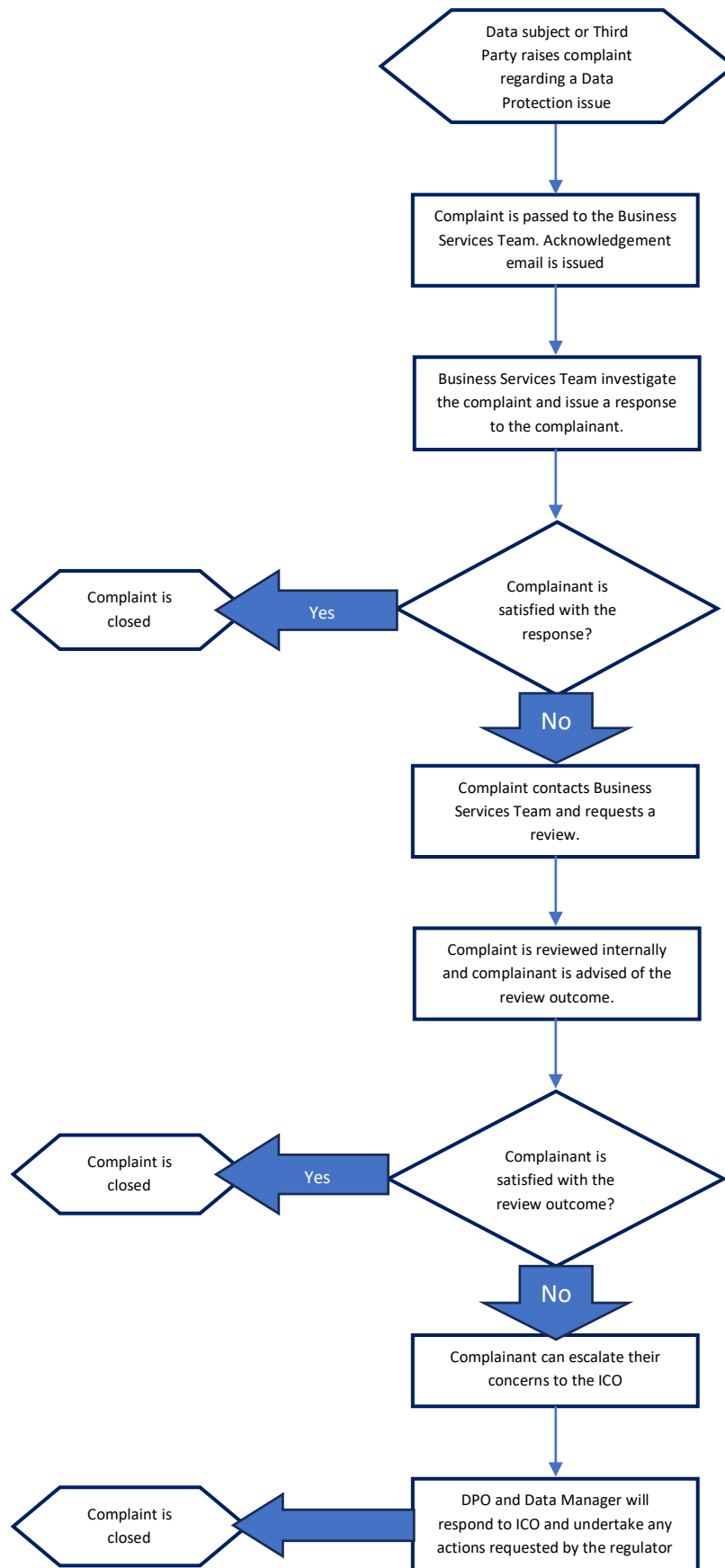
Each policy forms part of our Trust Governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

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Data Protection Complaints Procedure Flowchart



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (“UK GDPR”), the Data Protection Act 2018 (“DPA 2018”), and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (“PECR”) (together, the “Data Protection legislation”), give data subjects and applicable third parties rights in relation to personal data. This procedure details how the Trust / school will respond to complaints from data subjects and third parties relating to the use of personal data

Who are Data Subjects?

- 1.2 Data subjects are any natural living individuals whose personal data DSAMAT processes (collects, obtains, stores, retains, disposes of etc.). Data subjects can include staff members, students, applicants, prospective applicants, visitors, individuals captured by the school’s CCTV cameras, etc.

Data subjects’ rights

- 1.3 Under Data Protection legislation, data subjects have the right to the following and these rights can be exercised at any time:
- information about the processing of their data (UK GDPR Articles 12-14, and Recitals 58-62),
 - access their own personal data (UK GDPR Articles 12 and 15, and Recital 63),
 - correct personal data (UK GDPR Article 16),
 - erase personal data, also known as the right to be forgotten (UK GDPR Article 17, and Recitals 65 and 66),
 - restrict data processing (UK GDPR Article 18),
 - object to data processing, including direct marketing (UK GDPR Article 21, and Recitals 69 and 70),
 - receive a copy of their personal data or transfer their personal data to another data controller (data portability, UK GDPR Article 20, and Recital 68),
 - not be subject to automated decision-making and rights in relation to profiling (UK GDPR Article 22, and Recital 71), and
 - be notified of a data security breach (UK GDPR Article 34, and Recital 86).

What is a complaint?

- 1.4. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the Trust’s / school’s handling of a data subject’s personal data or the data of the individual they represent. This can also include dissatisfaction with how the Trust / school has responded to a previous data request, such as those detailed under 1.3

2. Scope

- 2.1. This procedure addresses complaints made by data subjects regarding the use of their personal data. Complaints may be made in relation to any aspect of the Trust’s / school’s processing of personal data including individual rights requests.

This could include:

- a data breach which impacted them;
- The Trust / school response to their Data Subject Access Request or other privacy rights request;
- how long the Trust / school is keeping their personal information;
- the accuracy of information the Trust / school holds about them;

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- the security measures the Trust / school has in place to protect their personal details; how the Trust / school has profiled them;
 - or any other data protection relation matter.
- 2.2. This procedure also addresses complaints made by third parties in relation to the Trust's / school's use of personal data. These may be, for example, in relation to the Trust's / school's response to a data related request from a third party, such as the Police or Local Government Agencies.
- 2.3. This procedure should also be followed for complaints in relation to use of personal data for direct marketing and/or profiling activity.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Trust Board has delegated day to day running of the Trust to the CEO.
- 3.2. The Head of Governance and Business Services has overall responsibility for this procedure but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the Data Protection Manager. All relevant members of staff have been made aware of the procedure and have received appropriate training.
- 3.3. All employees / staff are responsible for ensuring that any complaints that are made in relation to this procedure are reported to the Data Protection Manager (dpo@stalbandsmat.co.uk), and for cooperating with the Data Protection Manager in reviewing these complaints.
- 3.4. The Data Protection Manager will review this procedure from time to time (and at least every two years) to ensure that its provisions continue to meet our legal obligations and reflect best practice.

4. Making a Complaint

- 4.1. Data subjects and third parties may make a complaint relating to the Trust's / school's use of personal data. Complaints should be sent directly to the Data Protection Manager (dpo@stalbandsmat.co.uk). A member of the Governance and Business Services Team will normally acknowledge the complaint within 5 working¹ days. The Trust reserves the right to extend the period we need for response during school holiday periods.
- 4.2. Although a complaint may be brought at any time, there may be limits as to what the Trust can do in historic cases.
- 4.3. The Trust will only accept a complaint from a data subject's representative, if the representative provides the data subject's written consent authorising the representative to act on the data subject's behalf in relation to the complaint.
- 4.4. If there is any doubt about the identity of the complainant, the Governance and Business Services Team will first seek to verify the data subject's identity or third party's entitlement to act on behalf of the individual. The forms of identification that are acceptable from a data subject are as follows;
- a. Passport
 - b. Driving Licence
 - c. For third parties the identification requirements will vary dependent on their relationship to the data subject. Therefore these will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

¹ Working days are defined as days that schools in Central Bedfordshire are open to students.

5. Investigation and Complaint Outcome

- 5.1. Once all identification requirements have been met, the investigation will be carried out by the Business Services team usually within 20 working days. If further clarification is required from the complainant or more time is required for the response to be completed the Trust will inform the complainant prior to the original deadline.
- 5.2. The complaint outcome will be communicated to the complainant in writing, usually by email. The outcome will include the following information:
 - What has been done to resolve the complaint and, where appropriate, any actions that have been taken as a result
 - If the outcome considers that data protection law has been complied with, the detail of how and why will be explained
 - Sufficient information and detail to support the complainant's understanding of how the conclusion has been reached.

6. Review

- 6.1. If the complainant does not agree with the outcome, they can request a review of the decision. This request must be made within 1 calendar month of the original decision being communicated and should be sent to the Data Protection Manager (dpo@stalbandsmat.co.uk). The decision will be internally reviewed by the Head of Governance and Business Services usually within 20 working days from the receipt of the request for review.
- 6.2. Once the internal review has been completed, the Trust will communicate the outcome in writing, usually by email

7. Independent External Review

- 7.1. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can escalate their complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (the "ICO"). Information about how to make a complaint to the ICO can be found here: [Make a complaint | ICO](#)
- 7.2. In order to respond to the complaint, the Data Protection Manager will investigate the complaint based on the information provided by the ICO. This may necessitate access to personal data and other information held across DSAMAT. The cooperation of any staff members able to assist with the investigation will be required. The reason for the investigation may need to be disclosed to the relevant staff members. The Data Protection Manager will draft and submit a response to the ICO in consultation with the Head of Governance and Business Services and Legal Team.
- 7.3. In the absence of the Data Protection Manager, the Head of Governance and Business Services will appoint another member of the team to carry out the investigation and respond to the ICO.

8. Manifestly unfounded, abusive, vexatious or excessive correspondence and complaints Independent External Review

- 8.1. In some scenarios we can refuse to handle the complaint. This will be when a complaint is deemed to be manifestly unfounded, abusive, vexatious or excessive. Each complaint will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The following factors will be taken into consideration:

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- a. the data subject has explicitly stated that they intend to cause disruption (whether in the complaint, or in other correspondence), and has threatened individuals;
 - b. the data subject has made unsubstantiated accusations against individuals, and is persisting in those accusations;
 - c. the data subject is targeting particular individuals, against whom they have a personal grudge;
 - d. the data subject makes frequent complaints intended to cause disruption; and
 - e. the data subject continues to repeat the substance of previous complaints which have already been investigated.
- 8.2. Where a complaint is deemed to be manifestly unfounded, excessive, abusive or vexatious the Trust will contact the individual and in a reasonable timeframe explain to them:
- a. the reasons for refusing to consider the complaint;
 - b. their right to make a complaint to the ICO; and
 - c. their right to pursue their data subject rights through a judicial remedy.

9. Use of Data from Complaints

- 9.1. The Trust will collect data on complaint outcomes at each stage of this procedure and any complaints submitted by complainants to any regulators (including the ICO), and use the data:
- a. internally for reporting, evaluation, learning and training; and
 - b. externally for discussion with the regulators
- 9.2. The data used by the Trust for the purposes set out in paragraphs 9.1 a) and b) will be anonymised. Your personal data and sensitive personal data ('Personal Data') as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "DPA") may be disclosed to members of staff and regulators only for the purpose of dealing with your complaint, or a complaint arising out of it and/or implementing any recommendations. Personal Data will not be shared with any other third parties unless the Trust has your express consent, has a statutory obligation to do so, or is otherwise permitted to do so under the DPA.