



DMAT Handling Data Protection Complaint Policy 2026-2027

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Approval By: CEO/Exec approval – Pauline Montalto	Approval Date: 10 July 2026	Review Date: June 2027

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1. Introduction

This policy sets out how Durrington Multi Academy Trust handles complaints relating to the processing of personal data. It ensures compliance with data protection legislation and provides a clear, fair, and timely process for responding to concerns. A data protection complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about how personal information has been handled. Complainants do not need to use legal terminology to be treated as a data protection complaint.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to Pupils, Parents/Carers, Staff, Governors, and members of the public. It covers complaints about how the Trust collects, uses, stores, and protects personal data. This policy is published on the Trust website and referenced in privacy notices to ensure accessibility

3. Responsibilities

The Trust will appoint a Data Protection Officer who will be responsible for overseeing complaints and ensuring that all staff recognise and appropriately escalate complaints

Contact details: dpo@dmateducation

4. How to make a complaint

Individuals will be informed of the right to complain at point of data collection and within DSAR responses. Any expression of dissatisfaction received by any member of staff will be treated as a potential data protection complaint and escalated accordingly. This process is intended to resolve concerns before escalation to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Complaints can be made in any format and must be accepted regardless of the method.

The most common use formats are listed below:

- Email
- Telephone
- In writing

This complaints process is referenced in all privacy notices and is accessible at request in PDF via contacting dpo@dmateducation. There is also a link available on the Durrington Multi Academy Trust website. <https://dmateducation/>

5. Complaints from pupils

Pupils have the same data protection rights as adults.

The Trust will:

- Assess the child's capacity to understand their rights
- Communicate in clear, age-appropriate language

- Consider parental involvement only where appropriate and lawful

6. Complaints made by third parties

Where a complaint is made on behalf of another person,

The Trust will:

- Verify authorisation before proceeding
- Request appropriate evidence (e.g. signed authority or power of attorney)

For complaints about a child's data, parents may only act if:

- The child has authorised them; or
- The child lacks sufficient understanding; or
- It is in the child's best interests

7. Acknowledgement of complaints

All complaints will be acknowledged within 30 calendar days of receipt either by email or in a written letter. The acknowledgment will explain that the complaint is being Investigated. Where possible, acknowledgement will be provided using the same communication method used by the complainant.

8. Verifying identity

The Trust may request proof of identity where necessary. Requests for additional information will be proportionate and only made where required

9. Investigation process

Investigations will begin immediately upon receipt of the complaint. Each complaint will be handled on a case-by-case basis with no fixed investigation time limit.

The Trust will:

- Examine all relevant facts and records
- Speak with relevant staff
- Review applicable policies and procedures
- Identify whether data protection law has been complied with

The Trust will respond **without undue delay**. Where a full response cannot be provided promptly, the Trust will keep the complainant informed and provide an indicative timescale

10. Outcome of complaints

Once the investigation is complete, the Trust will, provide the outcome without undue delay, clearly explaining the findings of the investigation any remedial actions taken and the reasons behind decisions. Where appropriate, the Trust will apologise,

rectify errors Improve processes

Following each complaint, the Trust will review outcomes, identify any lessons learned and implement improvements to prevent recurrence. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to raise their concern with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), whose contact details will be provided.

11. Record Keeping

The Trust will maintain records of all data protection complaints, including:

- Date received
- Acknowledgements
- Investigation details
- Outcome
- Actions taken

Records will be retained in accordance with the Trust's data retention schedule of 6 Years. The Trust may also monitor trends and recurring issues to improve compliance.

12. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance.