

Teatime Tutoring Complaints Policy

Owner: Kirsty Dickenson, owner of Teatime Tutoring

Business: Teatime Tutoring, Private Tuition and Education Consultancy

Location: Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7AP

Telephone: 07523 413011

Email for general complaints: teatimetutoring@yahoo.com

Email for safeguarding concerns: safeguardingteatimetutoring@yahoo.com

Last reviewed: June 2026

Next review due: June 2027

1. Purpose of this policy

Teatime Tutoring is committed to providing high-quality, professional and nurturing tuition. Our ethos is centred on crafting confidence and empowering excellence. We value open communication with parents, students, tutors and clients, and we aim to resolve concerns fairly, promptly and respectfully.

This policy explains how parents, carers, students, tutors, clients or other individuals can raise a concern or complaint about Teatime Tutoring's services, communication, administration, tuition, data handling or safeguarding procedures.

Complaints will be handled with care, confidentiality and impartiality. Raising a complaint will not affect a student's right to continue receiving tuition, unless there is a separate safeguarding, safety, conduct or contractual reason why tuition cannot continue.

2. What this policy covers

This policy covers complaints about:

- the quality of tuition or educational support provided by Teatime Tutoring
- communication, administration, invoicing or scheduling
- the conduct of tutors working with or through Teatime Tutoring
- the learning environment, including in-person, online, group and holiday course tuition
- concerns about how personal data has been collected, used, stored, shared or handled
- concerns about whether Teatime Tutoring has followed its own policies or procedures

This policy does not replace Teatime Tutoring's Safeguarding Policy. If a concern suggests that a child, young person or adult at risk may be at risk of harm, the Safeguarding Policy will take priority.

3. Safeguarding concerns

Any safeguarding concern should be raised immediately with Kirsty Dickenson, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, using:

Safeguarding email: safeguardingteatimetutoring@yahoo.com

Mobile: +44 (0) 7523 413011

If a child or adult is in immediate danger, call **999**.

If the concern is about Kirsty Dickenson, or if someone feels unable to raise the concern directly with Teatime Tutoring, they should contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer, local safeguarding partnership, the NSPCC helpline or the police, depending on the nature and urgency of the concern.

Safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with Teatime Tutoring's Safeguarding Policy and will not wait for the ordinary complaints process where urgent action may be required.

4. Stage 1: Informal concerns

Many concerns can be resolved quickly and informally through a conversation.

Parents, carers, students, tutors or clients are encouraged to raise concerns as soon as possible by speaking or writing to Kirsty Dickenson. This allows Teatime Tutoring to understand the concern, clarify any misunderstanding and take appropriate action.

Examples of informal concerns may include:

- a question about lesson content
- a concern about lesson notes or feedback
- a scheduling issue
- uncertainty about homework or expectations
- a minor communication issue
- a concern about how a student is settling into lessons

Where possible, Teatime Tutoring will aim to respond to informal concerns within **5 working days**.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or if the person raising the concern wishes to make a formal complaint, Stage 2 should be followed.

5. Stage 2: Formal complaint

A formal complaint should be made in writing by email to:

teatimetutoring@yahoo.com

The complaint should include:

- the name of the person making the complaint
- the name of the student, where relevant
- the nature of the complaint
- relevant dates, times, names or lesson details
- any steps already taken to try to resolve the issue
- the outcome being sought

If a person is unable to put the complaint in writing, they may contact Teatime Tutoring by phone and Kirsty Dickenson will make a written record of the complaint.

Teatime Tutoring will acknowledge a formal complaint within **5 working days**.

Teatime Tutoring will then review the complaint, which may include:

- checking lesson notes, attendance records, invoices, emails or messages
- speaking with the tutor involved, where relevant
- reviewing relevant policies or procedures
- considering any evidence provided by the complainant
- identifying whether the matter also needs to be treated as a safeguarding, data protection or contractual issue

A written response will normally be provided within **15 working days** of acknowledging the complaint. If more time is needed, Teatime Tutoring will explain the reason for the delay and provide an updated response date.

6. Possible outcomes

After reviewing a complaint, Teatime Tutoring may:

- uphold the complaint
- partially uphold the complaint
- not uphold the complaint
- offer an apology
- explain the reasons for a decision
- offer a practical remedy, where appropriate
- review or amend a policy, process or communication method

- provide further clarification or information
- take internal action, where appropriate
- explain why no further action will be taken

Any remedy offered will depend on the nature and circumstances of the complaint.

7. Stage 3: Review

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response at Stage 2, they may request a review within **10 working days** of receiving the written response.

The request should explain why the complainant remains dissatisfied and what they believe has not been properly considered.

As Teatime Tutoring is a sole trader business, the review will be carried out by Kirsty Dickenson as owner of Teatime Tutoring. Where appropriate and proportionate, Teatime Tutoring may seek external advice, for example from a professional association, safeguarding organisation, legal adviser, insurance provider or relevant authority.

A final written response will normally be provided within **15 working days** of the review request. This response will explain the final position of Teatime Tutoring.

8. Data protection complaints

A data protection complaint is a complaint about how Teatime Tutoring collects, uses, stores, shares, retains or otherwise handles personal data.

This may include concerns about:

- what personal information Teatime Tutoring holds
- how personal data has been used or shared
- the accuracy of personal data
- access to personal data
- a request to correct or delete personal data
- direct marketing
- retention of records
- data security
- an alleged breach of data protection law

Data protection complaints should be sent to:

teatimetutoring@yahoo.com

Teatime Tutoring will acknowledge a data protection complaint within **30 days** of receiving it.

Teatime Tutoring will take appropriate steps to investigate the complaint and will respond without undue delay. The complainant will be kept informed about the progress of the complaint and will be told the outcome without undue delay.

If Teatime Tutoring decides not to take action in response to a data protection request or complaint, the complainant will be told the reason and informed of their right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Teatime Tutoring is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and pays the required data protection fee as a data controller.

9. Complaints to external organisations

Teatime Tutoring aims to resolve complaints directly wherever possible.

Where a complaint relates to data protection, individuals have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Where a complaint relates to safeguarding, individuals may contact the relevant local safeguarding partnership, Local Authority Designated Officer, NSPCC helpline or police, depending on the nature of the concern.

Where a complaint relates to consumer rights or contractual services, individuals may seek independent advice from an appropriate consumer advice service.

Where relevant, and if Teatime Tutoring is a member of a professional body, a complainant may also choose to contact that professional body for advice about its own complaints or disciplinary procedures.

10. Confidentiality and record keeping

Complaints will be handled confidentially and information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to review, investigate or respond to the complaint.

Teatime Tutoring will keep a written record of formal complaints, including:

- the complaint received
- dates and communication
- any evidence considered
- the outcome
- any actions taken

Complaint records will be retained in line with Teatime Tutoring's Privacy Policy, Safeguarding Policy and legal obligations.

Complaints involving safeguarding will be retained in line with safeguarding record keeping requirements.

11. Unreasonable, abusive or persistent complaints

Teatime Tutoring will always seek to deal with complaints respectfully and professionally. However, it also has a duty to protect tutors, students and the owner of Teatime Tutoring from behaviour that is abusive, threatening, discriminatory or unreasonably persistent.

If communication becomes abusive, aggressive, excessively repetitive or unreasonable, Teatime Tutoring may:

- ask for communication to be made only in writing
- limit communication to a specific email address or time frame
- decline to respond to repeated points that have already been addressed
- end tuition or services in line with the Terms and Conditions
- contact appropriate authorities if there is a threat to safety

This will not prevent a genuine safeguarding or data protection concern from being considered.

12. Learning from complaints

Teatime Tutoring will use complaints as an opportunity to reflect, improve and strengthen practice.

Where appropriate, complaints may lead to:

- clearer communication with parents or tutors
- updates to policies or procedures
- changes to administrative systems
- additional tutor guidance or training
- improvements to lesson summaries, invoicing or scheduling
- further safeguarding or data protection review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes in law, guidance or Teatime Tutoring's services.