

Guitar Academy — Complaints Procedure

For parents, guardians, students and teachers

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If something has gone wrong, we want to know. Most things are sorted out quickly by telling us. This procedure explains what happens if they are not.

Before anything else — concerns about a child

If your concern is about the safety or welfare of a child, it is not a complaint and this procedure does not apply. It is handled under our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead straight away.

You never have to come to us first, and you do not need our permission to go elsewhere. If your concern is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, about a partner in the business, or if you would simply rather go direct, contact:

Hampshire children's social care (Petersfield students)	0300 555 1384 (Mon–Thu 8.30am–5pm, Fri 8.30am–4.30pm) · Out of hours: 0300 555 1373
West Sussex children's social care (Chichester students)	01403 229900 (Mon–Fri 9am–5pm) · Out of hours: 033 022 26664
Local authority designated officer (LADO) — for concerns about an adult who works with children	Hampshire: search “LADO” at hants.gov.uk and use the “allegations against people in a position of trust” form. West Sussex: LADO@westsussex.gov.uk, advice line 0330 222 6450
Police	999 in an emergency · 101 otherwise
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 · help@nspcc.org.uk
Childline (for children)	0800 1111 · childline.org.uk

Raising a concern outside Guitar Academy will never affect your child's lessons, and no teacher will lose work for doing it.

1. What you can complain about

Anything: a lesson, a teacher, a decision, a charge, a venue, how we have communicated, how we have handled your information, or how we have dealt with an earlier concern.

2. Stage one — tell us

2.1 Speak to us, or write to us, at:

Complaints to
Email
Telephone
Post

Name: Vincent Hearn
info@guitaracademyuk.com
07385 921 406
Guitar Academy, Unit 4A Penns Road,
Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 2EW

2.2 Tell us what happened, when, who was involved, and what you would like us to do about it. Attach anything relevant.

2.3 We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

2.4 We will respond in full within twenty working days. If we need longer — because someone is away, or because we need to speak to a teacher or a venue — we will tell you before the twenty days are up, explain why, and give you a new date.

2.5 Our response will set out what we looked into, what we found, what we are doing about it, and what to do if you are not satisfied.

2.6 Please do not ask a teacher to resolve a complaint. Teachers are instructed to pass complaints to us the same day rather than deal with them personally. That is not them avoiding you — it is so complaints are recorded and handled consistently.

3. Stage two — review

3.1 If you are not satisfied with our response, write to us within twenty working days and say why.

3.2 The complaint will be reviewed by the other partner — someone who was not involved in the original response — wherever that is possible.

3.3 We will respond within a further twenty working days. **That response is our final answer.**

4. If you are still not satisfied

We are a small private business. There is no ombudsman or regulator for private music tuition, so we cannot refer you to one. You may:

- Take the matter to the courts. These terms are governed by the law of England and Wales.
- Complain to the **Information Commissioner's Office** (ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint, 0303 123 1113) if your complaint is about how we have handled personal information.
- Contact the **local authority designated officer, children's social care or the police** at any time if your complaint concerns a child. You do not need to have complained to us first.

Alternative dispute resolution is available in principle. We are not obliged to use it, and if we decide not to, we will tell you in our final response.

5. How we handle complaints

- We record every complaint, what we did about it, and the outcome.
- We handle complaints confidentially, sharing information only with those who need it to look into the matter.
- Complaining does not affect the service you receive. No student's lessons will be withdrawn because a complaint was made.
- We review complaints periodically to see whether anything needs to change.
- Complaint records are kept for **three years** from the date the matter is closed. Where a complaint touches on a child's welfare it is retained under the Safeguarding Policy instead.

6. Complaints from teachers

If you teach for Guitar Academy and you are worried about how the business is being run, about the conduct of another adult, about a student's treatment, or about unsafe practice, raise it — with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or directly with an outside body. **You will not lose work, or suffer any other detriment, for raising a concern in good faith**, whether or not it turns out to be well founded, and whether or not you raised it with us first. That undertaking is given contractually in clause 12 of your agreement. The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is 0800 028 0285.