



Complaints Policy

Approved Summer 2016

All school policies are reviewed by Governors annually

The Complaints Policy applies to parents/carers of students at the school.

Procedures for Dealing with Complaints

At Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre, we undertake to provide a friendly and safe environment in which students will be helped to achieve their potential, both academically and socially. We recognise that sometimes things can go wrong and parents may need to make a complaint or raise concerns they have with the School.

This procedure tells you what to do if this happens.

Stage 1

INFORMAL STAGE

Most complaints/issues can be resolved informally and quickly by discussion with the member of staff concerned. Alternatively parents/carers can write to these staff outlining the issue clearly and stating what their preferred outcome would be. All complaints should be addressed to the Headteacher and will normally be acknowledged within three to five school days. Where a meeting is requested by parents it should normally be arranged within 10 school days of the request being made. When parents request such a meeting they should again, if possible, outline the issue clearly and stating what their preferred outcome would be prior to the meeting taking place.

Stage 2

FORMAL STAGE

Where the matter cannot be resolved under the informal procedure referred to above, a formal written notice of the concern or complaint should be submitted to the Headteacher, or in the case of the complaint being about the Headteacher then to the Chair of Governors. This should set out in detail the matter of concern or complaint so that the situation is clear to all involved parties. The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if relevant) will respond in writing, normally within ten school days of receipt of the written notice and if necessary arrange a meeting, with the complainant, to consider the response. If a meeting is arranged, all parties will try to agree an acceptable outcome. This will be summarised in writing by the School after the meeting.

If the issue is complex, the matter may need to be investigated. This will be carried out in a timely manner. The school will endeavour to inform the parent/carer of the anticipated timescale for when the investigation will be completed.

Stage 3

Panel Hearing

If the complaint is still not resolved to the parent/carer's satisfaction they may appeal to a Panel Hearing to consider the complaint.

The Panel Hearing is made up of three members, at least one of whom should be independent of the running and management of the School with the two others normally members of the School's Governing Body, but none of whom shall have had previous involvement in the handling of the complaint.

The Panel Hearing should take place at a time convenient to all parties. The complainant, the Headteacher and any member of staff the complaint is about will normally be invited to the meeting. Any person invited can bring a friend or supporter if they wish. The Panel Hearing will consider any written material, and also give the person making the complaint and the Headteacher an opportunity to address the panel. All parties involved will be required to submit any written documentation in advance and in good time before the meeting in order that it may be considered. A delay in providing documents may result in a delay or postponement of the hearing. All parties will be given an opportunity to state their case. The Panel Hearing will ensure that all present are treated fairly. It will be minuted by the Clerk to Governors and everyone present will be given a copy of the minutes.

The Chair of the Panel Hearing will give a decision, in writing, usually within five school days after the meeting, along with the reasons for the decision.

Appeal

If, after this school-based process, the complaint is still not resolved to the parent/carer's satisfaction, a final recourse of writing to the Secretary of State is available.

Additional notes

- (a) Schools do not need to consider complaints made more than one year after the incident/situation.
- (b) In line with 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England' (DfE 2012), If a complaint relates to a student who has been permanently excluded from the school, but is still on the school roll, this complaint must be made directly to the Chair of Governors, at least 48 hours prior to the respective Governors' Disciplinary meeting. Any complaint received after this point will not be responded to.