

17. Complaint Policy & Procedure - 2022/23



The British Muslim School

You are the best nation raised up for humankind. You enjoin righteousness, forbid corruption and you believe in Allah. Al- Quran, Surah Al-Imran, ayah 110

Title	Complaint Policy & Procedure - 2022/23
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Subject	Complaint and Procedure
Created	March 2022
Approved by	Board of Governors
Review Date	September 2023 or earlier where there is a change in the applicable law affecting this Policy Guidance
Responsible person:	Principal/DSL/Governing body

INTRODUCTION

The Concerns and Complaints policy is designed to deal with the concerns and complaints of parents relating to their child in the most effective manner and in the shortest time possible. It is also designed to help pupils make a complaint if they so wish. Our complaints policy has been designed in line with the regulations of the Independent Schools Educational standards in force since January 2015, and the NMS for boarding schools 2015.

All complaints will be treated as expressions of genuine dissatisfaction and all complaints raised can be expected to be treated fairly and swiftly, in accordance with this procedure.

Parents are entitled to raise concerns about anything that affects their child's education, welfare, well-being or behaviour, such as:

- Child's education / progress
- Behavioural issues
- Any incident reported by the child
- Homework
- Boarding provision
- Other relevant issues

RAISING CONCERNS

Minor concerns or enquiries relating to your child can be raised directly with the relevant member of staff by telephone or when collecting the child after school; or, in the case of boarders, by telephoning the pupil's key worker or Boarding Housemaster. However, this should be a brief conversation not taking more than a few minutes and with consideration for the staff's after school duties. This procedure must not be used frequently, as recurring issues need to be dealt with by following the official complaints procedure. Parents may arrange an appointment with the teacher/relevant member of staff to discuss any concerns they have about their child. We will aim to arrange this within a week depending on the urgency of the matter.

- The teacher/other staff may also request a parent to arrange an appointment if he is unable to address your query immediately or feels that it is of an important nature and needs further exploration.
- The school senior leaders need to be aware of all meetings arranged between parents and teachers/other staff and may also attend the meeting.

After meeting with the relevant staff, if the parents are unsatisfied or would like to take the matter further they should follow the school's complaints procedure.

Concerns and Complaints Raised by Pupils

All concerns and complaints from pupils at the school, should be addressed without delay, within a shorter time frame than indicated in this procedure if possible. Pupils must be kept informed of the progress of their concerns or complaints. Every effort should be made to relieve any anxiety they may feel.

Procedure for pupils wishing to make a complaint

1. If a verbal complaint is made to a member of staff by a pupil a note should be made of the date, time and nature of the complaint in the Pupils' Concerns and Complaints book. The complaint may relate to any aspect of school life or boarding provision, or any person employed and/or working in the school or on behalf of school.
2. The pupil should be asked to complete the appropriate complaint form at the time or as soon as reasonably possible afterwards. It should be explained that the complaint will be considered by the principal or, in his absence, by his Deputy and that he will be able to present their complaint in person at the appropriate time. There should be no undue delay in this process.
3. If the complaint is about the conduct or actions of the principal, or Deputy, the Chair of Governors should carry out the procedures in accordance with the procedures described in this policy. If the complaint is of a serious nature and could involve disciplinary proceedings the Chair of Governors will take responsibility for the investigation unless the matter is of a safeguarding nature, in which case the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff will be followed.
4. Pupils must be assured that they will not be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE PROTOCOL

For the effective use of the complaints procedure the following must be adhered to by the parents and the school.

1. All complaints are dealt with in **STRICT** confidence. Only those members of staff concerned and the school management will be aware of the complaint.
2. Parents are also under a contract to respect the school's confidentiality and not discuss the complaint with any other party. Failure to follow the correct procedure will be taken as a violation of contract between the parents and the school.
3. Parents are not allowed to contact school staff outside of school hours unless their child is a boarder, in which case they should respect the communication times.

STAGE 1: INFORMAL STAGE

You should contact the school informally to discuss the matter of concern with the teacher or other relevant member of staff.

- All matters will be taken seriously and all efforts made to resolve them amicably and in the shortest time possible, normally within 48 hours.
- The complaint will be recorded in the Complaints log by the teacher/other staff concerned.
- Senior leaders will be made aware of the complaint and informed of any meeting arranged between the member of staff and parent.
- The principal or a member of the internal management team may choose to attend the meeting.

STAGE 2: FORMAL STAGE

If the matter is unresolved after discussions with the member of staff concerned then you should formally write to the principal of the school outlining the details of the complaint.

- The principal will acknowledge your letter within 48 hours of receiving it, suggesting two appropriate times to set up a face-to-face meeting.
- Two members of the school senior management team will then take the matter up with the teacher or appropriate member of the staff concerned.
- They will invite the parents for a meeting with the teacher or member of staff concerned, scheduled within 5 working days of receiving the letter of complaint. Should parents not find the suggested times suitable, they should contact the school by telephone to make alternative arrangements.
- The matter is then fully investigated, and followed up with action points to resolve the complaint; targets are agreed with all parties concerned.
- The principal confirms the outcomes of the investigation in writing to parents, along with an outline of the action taken by the school and targets agreed with all parties concerned. Timescale: 20 working days from receipt of the formal complaint.
- The principal will follow this up 5 to 10 working days (depending on the nature of the complaint) after the targets have been agreed.
- Parents will be invited back after the follow up to see if the matter has been resolved to their satisfaction or if other measures need to be taken. Timescale: 35 to 40 days after receipt of the formal complaint.

STAGE 3: FINAL STAGE

If complainants are still unsatisfied with the response to their complaint, then they should direct their complaint to the Chair of the governing body and request a hearing. The request will be acknowledged within 48 hours.

The complaint will be heard by a panel consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and including one person who is independent of the management and running of the school. The Chair of the governing body is responsible for the selection of the hearing panel. The hearing should take place within 15 working days of the receipt of the request for an appeal.

Parents may attend the panel hearing and bring with them a person of their choice.

Following the hearing, the panel will consider all the evidence, summarise their findings and make recommendations. The panel will provide a copy of their findings and recommendations to the principal, complainant and, where relevant, to the person complained about, within 25 days of the receipt of the request for a panel hearing.

Ultimate recourse

If, having exhausted all the stages of this policy, you are still not satisfied, you may consider complaining to the DfE (registration authority) or Ofsted

Independent Education and Boarding Team
Department for Education
Bishopsgate House
Feet hams
Darlington
DL1 5QE

Or:

Ofsted Complaints Helpline

0300 123 1231

0300 123 1231.

open 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

Alternatively, you can email us at.

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

WRITTEN RECORDS

The school will:

- keep a record of **all** complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; this record must show the action taken by the school, regardless of whether these complaints were upheld; the record will consist of a log of all complaints on one hand; on the other hand, individual complaints and all the correspondence and evidence related to them, will be kept in a separate, confidential file. The log of complaints and the actual records of each complaint will clearly indicate whether the complaint was resolved informally, following the formal procedure or whether it proceeded to a panel hearing. The log and the records will also clearly indicate which complaints were made about the boarding provision.
- keep all records relating to individual complaints (correspondence, statements, logs and other records) confidential in a secure file; allow Ofsted inspectors to inspect these records; provide copies of the records to the DFE if requested or required
- keep findings and recommendations of a hearing panel stored securely and make them available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the principal
- keep a record of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, which will be made available to parents and others on request.

Monitoring and evaluation

The principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will monitor the implementation of this policy through termly checks of logs and records of complaints which they will analyse to further improve systems. They will analyse the complaints related to the boarding provision separately from the complaints relating to the day school so as to be able to assess the effectiveness of the provision. They will provide written feedback on how to remedy deficiencies if any, and how to further improve practices. They will carry out follow-up checks to verify that steps are duly taken to improve the management of complaints.

The governing body will hold the school to account in respect of the management of complaints through their annual safeguarding audit.

The views of parents, staff, pupils, visitors and governors will be considered to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

Date of Policy Approved: March 2022

Print Name (Chair of Governors): Mr. **Misbah Rahman**

Signature (Chair of Governors):

Next Review Date: September 2023

Responsibility for review: Principal (First Aider)/ Governors

Reviewed: September 2022 Next review date: September 2023 (or later if the government publishes updates later)

APPENDIX A

Complaint form to be completed by a parent or other adult

Your Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Contact Number:

Pupil's Name:

Pupil's year group

Relationship to Pupil:

Please tell us what it is you are unhappy about (order facts chronologically, and provide dates and times if possible):

What action do you feel might resolve or improve the situation at this stage?

Are you sending us any paperwork about your complaint? If so please give details:

Date:

Signature:

SCHOOL USE ONLY

Date Acknowledgement Sent:

By Whom:

Complaint Referred to:

Date:

APPENDIX B

Form to be completed to request a panel hearing; return to the Chair of Governors who will acknowledge receipt and select a panel for the hearing

Your Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Contact Number:

Pupil's Name:

Pupil's year group

Relationship to Pupil:

Please tell us what it is you are unhappy about (order facts chronologically, and provide dates and times if possible):

What action have you taken so far (including the names of the members of staff who have dealt with your complaint so far) and what was the outcome?

What action do you feel might resolve or improve the situation at this stage?

Are you sending us any paperwork about your complaint? If so please give details:

Date:

Signature:

SCHOOL USE ONLY:

Date Acknowledgement Sent:

By Whom:

Complaint Referred to:

Date:

Complaint form to be completed by a pupil

Your Name:

Your Year group:

Day pupil or boarder:

Please tell us what it is you are unhappy about (order facts chronologically, and provide dates and times if possible):

What action do you feel might resolve or improve the situation at this stage?

Do you have any witnesses or any evidence to support your complaint? If so please give details:

Date:

Signature:

SCHOOL USE ONLY

Complaint received by:

Complaint logged by:

Complaint Referred to:

Date:

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE SUMMARY

