



Complaints Policy and procedure

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Procedures for dealing with complaints

At Two bridges School, we undertake to provide a friendly and safe environment in which students will be helped to achieve their potential and develop strategies for managing their own behaviours and emotions.

We recognise that sometimes things do not go as well as we would all like and parents, carers and members of the public may need to make a complaint or raise concerns they have with the School. This policy guides you in what to do if this happens and is freely available from reception areas at any of our sites or from our School Website.

Informal stage

If you have a complaint/issue about any situation concerning your child, you should address this to the Form Tutor in the first instance. Most complaints can be dealt with immediately and resolved speedily at this level. The Form Tutor should keep you informed as to the progress of the investigation around your complaint and give you clear timescales as to when the complaint will be resolved. This communication can be done in person, by phone or in a written letter. It is often best to arrange a time to pop in and meet the member of staff in person at the end of a school day to resolve matters quickly.

Communications relating to any complaint will be recorded and logged in a phone contact or meeting minutes form and retained in the school records. A copy of any notes can also be made available to the parent, carer or member of the public making the complaint.

If you are not happy with the resolution, you may then ask to speak to a more senior member of staff with responsibility for leading the keystage that your child attends. This member of staff may initially attempt to address your complaint over the phone but may ask you to come in for a meeting to discuss the complaint further before giving you estimated timescales in which your complaint will be addressed. In responding to your complaint, staff may make temporary agreements with yourself whilst the complaint is being investigated. One example of a temporary arrangement is that an agreement may be made for your child to change class or to sit in a specific place away from another pupil in class.

Formal Stage

If you are unhappy with the resolution to your complaint from the senior member of staff then you may decide to refer your complaint to the Head Teacher, which should be done in writing giving a clear outline of the complaint/concerns and the actions to this point. The Head Teacher will contact you by phone to discuss the matter and make arrangements for you to come in for a meeting to resolve the issues as quickly as is possible. At the meeting all parties will have time to discuss their concerns and suggest ways to resolve the matter, all parties in the meeting will make agreement together as to an acceptable outcome. This agreement will be written down and copies provided to parent/carer or member of the public to ensure appropriate actions are taken in a timely fashion to resolve this matter.

If the matter is complex it might require the Head Teacher to investigate the situation with other staff, students or parents/carers which would always be intended to be concluded within 10 school days. If for any reason this time scale cannot be met the Head Teacher would communicate this to the complainant and an agreed timescale would be set.

After meeting with the Head teacher, if the parent, carer or member of the public is still unhappy with the outcome of the complaint then the matter should be referred in writing to the Chair of the Management Committee. The School will provide you with contact details for the Chair if you request these, but it is preferable for all parties to attempt to resolve issues within the School in order to maintain positive working relationships where possible.

The chair of the management committee would contact any complainant within 15 days of receipt of a written complaint and make arrangements to investigate the complaint herself as well as inform the complainant of the timescale when it is felt this matter would be resolved.

If the Head Teacher is the subject of the complaint then this should be directed straight to the Chair of the Management Committee in the first instance and not directed to any other member of staff.

If the complaint is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent, carer or member of the public then the Chair of the Management Committee can set up an Independent Panel Hearing to consider the complaint. As far as is possible it is recommended that an Independent panel Hearing is an absolute last resort.

The Chair of the Management Committee can appoint an independent investigating officer to gather evidence and conduct preliminary interviews in the Panel's behalf. The investigating officer will provide a detailed report of his/her investigation of the complaint. Parents/carers should be given a copy of this report. It is important that the investigating officer is seen as impartial, so if the Investigating officer is another governor, s/he cannot be a member of the independent panel. The independent panel is made up of 3 members of which one member will be independent of the senior leadership team and/or management committee

The Independent Panel should meet at a time convenient to all parties and given reasonable notice. The complainant, the Head Teacher, the Chair of Management Committee and any member of staff the complaint is about will be invited to the meeting. Any person invited can bring a friend or supporter if they wish. The Independent Panel will consider any written material, and also give the person making the complaint and the Head Teacher, Chair of Management Committee and staff an opportunity to state their case and to question others present. The Panel will ensure that all present are treated fairly. The Clerk to Management Committee will minute the meeting, and everyone present will be given a copy of the minutes.

The Panel will give its decision, in writing, within five School working days

after the meeting, along with the reasons for their decision. If after this School based process the complaint is still not resolved to the parent/carer's satisfaction, they should write to the Secretary of State, Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, WA7 2GJ If a complaint is not from a parent/carer of a student of the School (an example being a member of the public) these should be made directly to the Headteacher, preferably in writing.

All complaints will be recorded formally, by the School in a central log, which will indicate at which stage the complaint was resolved. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential. Parents and members of the public may request details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding academic year.

If, once the entire process has been followed in line with this policy, parents are not satisfied that their complaint has been handled properly, then representation should be made to the DFE via GOV.UK, using the on-line form under the section 'Taking the Complaint Further'.

It should be noted that schools do not need to consider complaints made more than one year after the incident/situation. If a complaint is made about an issue that is over a year old the School will write to the complainant explaining this is the case.

As a service, which wholeheartedly supports restorative justice practices, it is our aim to resolve complaints and issues in a supportive manner which allows both parties to move on positively. All complaints will be addressed using these embedded principles where appropriate.

Reviewed July 2022
Next Review Date: July 2024

Approved on behalf of Management Committee

Name.....

Signature..... Date