



**PENAIR
SCHOOL**



Complaints Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for dealing with complaints to the school about the actions of the school or its personnel. As a school we recognise the importance for all concerned in dealing with any complaint fairly, swiftly and transparently. This policy has application to all complaints save those that involve child protection issues and Headteacher decisions to permanently exclude a student from school. Separate procedures apply to each of such cases.

Framework:

There are potentially 4 stages involved in resolving any complaint.

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

1. The initiation of a complaint should be by contacting one of the following people -
 - (a) Educational issues – the tutor, teaching team leader or learning leader.
 - (b) Pastoral care – the tutor or a deputy headteacher.
 - (c) Disciplinary matters – the staff member imposing any sanction or a deputy headteacher.
 - (d) Financial or administrative matters – the director of finance and business.
2. In the event of such an informal complaint we aim, as a school, to discuss the complaint with the complainant and, in good faith, make a genuine attempt to resolve it to his or her satisfaction.

Stage 2 – Formal complaint

1. This is the second stage in the complaints process. It is intended to cover complaints unresolved at Stage 1 and other complaints which require greater investigation before a resolution is possible.
2. To begin this stage the person complaining should write with full details and any supporting documents to the Headteacher. Receipt of the application will be acknowledged by post or email with an indication of the likely timescale for investigation and response.
3. The investigation will be undertaken by the Headteacher or such other senior staff member as the Headteacher decides. A complainant may be asked for further detail.
4. The Headteacher will inform the complainant in writing by post or email of the outcome of any such investigation as soon as reasonably practicable. It needs to be noted that at certain times of the year the response to a complaint may take longer than would otherwise appropriate.

Stage 3 – Reference to Chair of Governors

1. A complainant dissatisfied with the outcome of a stage 2 investigation may ask that the complaint, investigation and outcome be reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Such a request should be made within one week of receiving the outcome of Stage 2.
2. The Chair of Governors will, in such circumstances, undertake a review of the relevant matters and notify the complainant of the outcome in writing ordinarily within 3 weeks on receipt of the request for such review.
3. It should be noted that the remit of the Chair of Governors is to carry out a review rather than a separate investigation.

Stage 4 – Review Panel

1. This procedure is available only to a complainant dissatisfied with the outcome of Stages 1, 2 and 3.
2. A complainant wishing to begin a stage 4 process should write to that effect to the Company Secretary within one week after the end of the Stage 3 process. Receipt of such a request will be communicated to the complainant by post or email with an indication of the likely timescale for the Stage 4 review.
3. The review panel will consist of at least 3 persons nominated by the Company Secretary. One such person will be independent of the running and management of the school and all will have no prior knowledge of the complaint. The composition of the panel will be communicated to the complainant as soon as reasonably practicable. A hearing will be fixed of which the complainant will be given written notice.
4. Attendance at the review panel hearing by the complainant is recommended. A complainant may be accompanied by an adult who is not legally qualified. The school discourages students attending such hearings. A record of the hearing will be taken by the Company Secretary or his nominee.
5. The hearing is not a legal proceeding and the procedure adopted is in the discretion of the chair of the review panel. A complainant will be permitted to ask questions and make points but normally evidence will not be taken, in keeping with the fact that the panel's remit is to review the outcomes

arrived at through the previous stages of the complaints process. The panel may ask to hear from any other person involved in the matters giving rise to the complaint.

6. At the end of the hearing the Chair of the panel will indicate to the complainant whether it is anticipated that an outcome can be communicated to the complainant on the day of hearing. The panel may withdraw to deliberate. In the event that a decision cannot be communicated immediately the Chair of the panel will indicate to the complainant the likely timescale for resolution of the review process.

Additional Matters

1. The school keeps a written record of all complaints and the manner in which they are resolved, However, documents and details relative to a specific complaint are treated as confidential to the complainant and such details are not revealed unless the school is obliged by law to do so. Any data retained after a complaint is resolved will be handled in accordance with the school's obligations under data protection legislation.
2. If a complainant objects to communication by email they are asked to say so.
3. It is open to a parent or guardian or a student to contact Ofsted with regard to a complaint concerning a student's welfare. Ofsted will, ordinarily expect any such complainant to have followed the school complaint procedures before contacting them. Concerns can be reported to Ofsted on 08456 404040 or by writing to the Ofsted Regional Office:

South
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Freshford House
Redcliffe Way
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BS1 6LX

Written by Mr Guy
Chappell – Director of
Business & Enterprise
Reviewed by Mr Nick
Vincent- Governor

Approved by Governing
Body 19 March 2015

Governing Body agreed
that future review by the
Community & Ethos
Committee of the
Governing Body next
review March 2019

