

POLICY

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR BABINGTON HOUSE This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS

REVIEWED BY T Lello, B McDonald-Smith, C Looker

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GOVERNOR APPROVED: C TURNER

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TO BE NEXT REVIEWED: July 2018

Introduction

Babington House School has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. We have a procedure for dealing with complaints or concerns so that we can resolve as many as possible and preserve the goodwill of the staff, pupils and parents. If parents of our current pupils do have a concern/complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. Complaints raised by a former parent will also be addressed in accordance with this Procedure if the complaint was initiated before the child left the school.

In the case of parents appealing against an exclusion, including fee-related exclusions, Stage 3 of this procedure will be used to address this.

This policy is available on the our school website for parents to access in addition to hard copies held in the school policy folders held in the main school entrance.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head of Senior School, the Head of the Prep department, or finally the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to a teacher, the Headmaster or another member of the Senior Leadership Team will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the head of department, The Headmaster or another member of the Senior Leadership Team deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form teacher will make a **written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received**. Should the matter not be resolved within 10 working term days from receipt of the complaint or in the event that the Form teacher and the parent(s) fail **to reach a satisfactory resolution within that time then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2** of this Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should **put their complaint in writing** to the Headmaster. After considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action will be at the Headmaster's discretion.

- In most cases, the Headmaster or delegated individual from the Senior Leadership Team, will speak to parents concerned, normally **within 2 working term days** of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headmaster or delegated individual from the Senior Leadership Team to hold further discussions or meetings with Parents, staff and pupils in order to carry out further investigations.
- The information obtained from these discussions will be considered in relation to the complaint to establish all necessary facts.
- The Headmaster will **keep written records** of all matters relating to the complaint, including meetings and interviews, and whether the complaint is resolved at the formal stage or proceeds to a panel hearing. The written record will also detail any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether it is upheld. Written records will include:
 - the stage at which the complaint was resolved
 - the timescale within which the complaint was resolved
 - action taken by the school as a result of the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and **parents will be informed of the decision in writing within 5 school working term days**. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If the Headmaster feels it is necessary to call in a Governor at Stage 2 in order to use their professional judgement, then the Headmaster will do so at his discretion.
- **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision and their child(ren) are still on the school roll, they are permitted to proceed to Stage 3** of the procedure.
- Any complaint proceeding to stage 2 is to be set out on a Summary Complaints Report (see attached), which is circulated and updated for each Board Meeting.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be asked to complete a Complaint Summary Form and will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. Upon receipt of the Complaint Summary Form, the Clerk to the Governors will acknowledge the complaint in writing or via email.

- **The matter, as outlined in the Complaint Summary Form, will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.** The panel will consist of three panel members, often Governors, who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and **one of whom is independent of the management and running of the school.** (See *Members and associate members of the board of Governors*). The independent panel member will be appointed depending on the complaint itself, to ensure that the panel member has the requisite skills and interests.
- **Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of Governors.** Clerk to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 15 school working term days** from the date of acknowledgement of the complaint. (Please see EYFS requirements below)
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than **4 days** prior to the hearing.
- **The parents may be accompanied to the hearing to support them.** This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representations will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation, especially with respect to fee-related complaints
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete **within 10 working term days of the Hearing.** **The Clerk to Governors will write to the parents informing them of the Panel's decision and the reasons for it.** (The decision of the Panel will be final). **The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about. The findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chairman of Governors and the Head.**
- **Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them, or where any other legal obligations prevails.**
- In the 2015 - 2016 academic year 2 complaints proceeded to either the formal stage or a panel hearing.

EYFS – Additional Complaints Procedures

- In addition to the above procedures, written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 25 working term days. The record of complaints must be made available to ISI on request.
- Contact details for ISI are available in the Nursery and Reception Welcome Packs that are given to parents, prior to their children commencing at Babington House School. Parents have a right to contact ISI if they believe the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Summary Complaints Report

Complainant:	
Date Complaint received:	
Brief Summary of Nature of the Complaint:	
Who is Assigned to Panel to Action/Resolve the Complaint:	
Status:	
Target Date for Resolution:	
To be presented at Board Meeting on:	
Action taken by the school as a result of these complaints:	