

1. Policy Statement

Bright Scholar, the Local Governing Body (LGB) and staff of Bournemouth Collegiate School are committed to providing the best experience for pupils and parents. We understand that when there is dissatisfaction and a pupil or parent wishes to express their concern or make a formal complaint, we have a duty to listen, investigate and communicate.

Bournemouth Collegiate School (BCS) recognises that parents will, from time to time, have normal and legitimate concerns about the progress, achievement, behaviour or welfare of their son or daughter. Parents are encouraged to make those concerns known to staff so that they can be addressed in partnership with the School.

Parents may also have reason to make a complaint, defined as ‘any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School’.

BCS recognises the difference between a concern which can be conveyed informally, and a formal complaint defined as in the form of a specific focussed dissatisfaction.

At BCS we aim to:

- Take all concerns and complaints seriously.*
- Make every effort to deal with complaints informally and at an early stage, in the spirit of partnership.*
- Resolve all complaints within 28 actual days (where reasonably possible) of the complaint being received and notify the complainant of the outcome.*
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in line with the procedures set out in this document.*
- Ensure that complaints are resolved either to the complainant’s satisfaction or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and our duties to pupils with our responsibilities to all parties concerned.*
- Ensure that, where appropriate, a full and fair investigation of the issue is undertaken.*
- Ensure that all boarders have an opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision, are able to raise concerns and make complaints, and their views are given appropriate weight in decisions about the running of the School.*
- Ensure that no-one, including pupils, are penalised for making a complaint in good faith.*
- Keep a written record, for at least three years, of all complaints, the action taken and at what stage they were resolved. This information is provided to Ofsted and ISI at their request.*
- Review regularly at senior leadership level the written record of complaints and their outcomes.*

- *Keep confidential all records relating to individual complaints except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them.*

A written record is kept of all complaints and whether they were resolved at Stage One, Two or proceeded to a Panel Hearing, is held by the Headmaster's PA. The record of all written complaints and their outcomes is reviewed regularly by the Headmaster to identify whether review or change in practice is needed and so that patterns can be identified, and appropriate interventions made. The record of complaints is kept for at least three years.

All records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, requests access to them.

Boarders have an opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision, are able to raise concerns and make complaints, and their views are given appropriate weight in decisions about the running of the school. Pupils are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith.

Parents are also free to make a complaint to ISI (or, regarding boarding welfare or EYFS, to OFSTED) if they so wish. Ofsted will be provided, on request, with a record of all complaints with regards to the EYFS setting and the action that was taken as a result of each complaint. Relevant contact details are set out below-

ISI:

*CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London
EC1A 9HA
Phone: 020 7600 0100
www.isi.net
e-mail: info@isi.net*

OFSTED:

*Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M12 2WD
Phone: 0300 123 1231
www.ofsted.gov.uk
e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk*

This policy is applicable to pupils and parents of all registered pupils in our School including our boarders and those in our EYFS setting and BCS is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the Equality Act 2010. Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

The School's complaints process does not apply to parents of prospective pupils and only applies to parents of former pupils if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was registered at the School.

Complaints should not cut across the avenues of appeal. Therefore, this policy excludes: exclusions, SEN /EHCP assessments, child protection issues and other services hosted at the school.

Copies of this document are available to staff, pupils, and parents on the School's website and paper copies are available on request from the School office and should be read in conjunction with the BCS Whistleblowing Policy.

The School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

This document is reviewed annually by the Senior Executive Management Team, made up of the Headmaster, Senior Deputy Head at the Senior School, Head of Prep School and the Business Manager, or as events or legislation change requires. The next scheduled date for review is September 2022.

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure (stage 2 or 3) during the last school year (2020-21) was 1 at the Prep School and 0 at the Senior School. The number of formal complaints is reviewed annually by the LGB. **Last review was October 2020. Add to LGB agenda (and then update date)**

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3. Procedures

Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that complaints are dealt with under the terms of this policy. To that end, staff should be aware of the procedures so that they know what to do if they receive a complaint.

As part of the role, the Headmaster is required to prepare an annual report regarding complaints received for the LGB, which is also available for CGS Exec.

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for the management of complaints and, together with the LGB, the responsibility for the publication and implementation of the formal complaints procedure.

Implementation and procedures

The complaints procedure:

- Explains how a concern or a complaint can be made and to whom.
- Sets out the importance of being able to deal with concerns at an early stage and using informal processes.
- Sets out clearly the stages to be used in dealing with a complaint and the way the complaint will be investigated and recorded.
- Sets out clear timetables for the management of the complaint.

The formal complaints procedure has three stages:

Stage one: Informal Resolution of a Concern

Stage two: Complaint heard by the Headmaster

Stage three: Complaint heard by LGB Complaints Appeal Panel

STAGE ONE: INFORMAL RESOLUTION OF A CONCERN

Most concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If a parent has a concern, they should normally contact their son/daughter's form tutor, class teacher or subject teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, he/she may need to consult with other staff.

Concerns made directly to a senior member of staff, e.g. Headmaster, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Heads, Head of the Prep School or Assistant Heads, will usually be referred to the relevant person responsible unless the senior member of staff deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The person dealing with the concern will make a written record of the concern and the date on which it was received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or in the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed to Stage 2 and to raise a formal complaint.

Senior School

Academic concerns are reported and logged via line management meetings /minutes.

Pastoral concerns are reported via Pastoral /Head of Year /Tutor meetings /minutes.

Combinations of academic and pastoral concerns are coordinated by the Head of Year.

Where concerns appear to be more significant or if a pattern is identified, the line manager will raise at Senior Management Team meetings, where SMT will identify if there are more widespread concerns and if further action, intervention or support is required.

Heads of Year and the pastoral team look for patterns of concerns raised, by year group, pupil, gender, teacher etc. and again these will be passed on if patterns are identified.

Prep School

Concerns raised at the Prep School are dealt with by the form teacher and/or the phase leaders in the first instance or by one of the Assistant Heads. Details of any meetings with parents are saved in the pupils own 'pupil file' on the secure drive and copied to the Head of Prep School.

Where concerns are deemed to be more significant the Head of Prep School will become involved and will attempt to resolve the issues informally, logging these on the complaints log.

The Head of Prep School, Headmaster and Chair of LGB will monitor the log and look for any patterns.

STAGE TWO: COMPLAINT HEARD BY THE HEADMASTER

If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their concern in writing (using appendix 1) to the Headmaster (or the Chair of the LGB if the complaint is about the Headmaster) at which point it becomes a formal complaint. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, a senior member of staff not so far involved in the complaint will speak with the parents concerned, normally within five working days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the senior member of staff to carry out further investigations; written records of meetings held in relation to the complaint will be kept. Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and parents will be informed in writing within 28 days of the School having received the complaint. The Headmaster will also give reasons for the decision.

If parents are not satisfied with the Headmaster's decision, they may proceed to Stage 3.

Proceeding to Stage 3 must be commenced with 10 working days of the receipt of the Headmaster's decision.

STAGE THREE: PANEL HEARING

If a parent seeks to proceed to Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the School LGB, who calls hearings of a Complaints Panel. The matter will then be dealt with by a Complaints Panel.

The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members

shall be appointed by the Chair of the LGB or UK Director of Bright Scholar, each of these people can be included in the panel.

The Clerk, 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 working days.

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 three working days prior to the hearing.

The parent may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person; this may be a relative or friend. Similarly, the Head may be accompanied. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate, and the proceedings will not be recorded via an electronic recording device without the consent of both the Chair of the Complaints Panel and the parent; any recording will be used only to assist the Panel members in reaching their decision and formulating their reasons and will belong to the School.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent's complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

After due consideration of the facts, they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing.

The Panel will write to the parent informing them of its decision and the reasons for it.

The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parent, the Headmaster, Chair of the LGB, the UK Director of Bright Scholar and, where relevant, the person complained about. The decision of the LGB Complaints Appeal Panel is final.

A copy of any findings is made available for inspection at the School by the Head and the Chair of the LGB / UK Director of Bright Scholar.

COMPLAINTS DIRECTED AGAINST THE LGB

This procedure specifies how a complaint will be dealt with if it concerns the conduct of a member of the LGB, or where these have been involved in the issue previously.

For each complaint being dealt with under the formal complaint's procedure, the UK Director for Bright Scholar will carry out the investigation.

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The process of listening to and resolving complaints will contribute to the improvement of BCS. When individual complaints are heard, BCS may identify underlying issues that need to be addressed.

The monitoring and review of complaints by the Headmaster, Executive Senior Management Team and LGB will be seen as a useful tool in evaluating BCS's performance.

The record of all written complaints and their outcomes is reviewed regularly by the Executive Senior Management Team and Chair of Local Governing Body to identify whether review or change in practice is needed and so that patterns can be identified, and appropriate interventions made.

Appendix 1: Complaint Form

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS and return to the Headmaster, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.			
Your name			
Pupil's name			
Your relationship to the pupil			
Address			
Postcode			
Contact telephone number (1)			
Contact telephone number (2)			
Please give details of your complaint below			
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (To whom did you speak to and what was the response?)			
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?			
Are you attaching any paperwork?		YES / NO	
If so, please give details			
Signature:		Date:	
For Official use only			
Date acknowledgement sent		Complaint resolved at which stage	
Acknowledgement sent by		Complaint recorded in school records	
Complaint referred to			
Complaint referred on (date)			