



Blackwell Education
Empowering Knowledge For All

Blackwell Education

Complaints and Compliments Policy

Implemented April 2020

Review April 2021

Introduction

The policy is for the benefit of pupils and parents/carers of pupils at the Provision. The policy will be relied upon in respect of all concerns or complaints by parents/carers and pupils made against the Provision except in respect of;

- (a) Child protection allegations, where a separate policy and procedure applies;
- (b) Exclusions, where a separate policy and procedure applies;
- (c) Appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications, where a separate appeals procedure applies.

The Provision expects that most concerns can be resolved informally and recognises that the majority of issues raised by parents/carers or pupils are concerns rather than complaints. The Provision will use its best endeavours to resolve any concerns that are made on this basis. The Provision is committed to taking concerns seriously at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without the need for formal procedures. The Provision recognises however that, depending on the circumstances and the nature of the complaint, parents/carers or pupils may, in appropriate circumstances, wish to or may be asked to follow the formal stages of this policy from the outset.

If the informal procedures fail to resolve the issue, a formal complaint about any matter (not involving child protection allegations, internal assessment decisions or a decision to exclude a student), must be given verbally or in writing to the Director in the first instance.

Every complaint shall receive fair and proper consideration and a timely response but in order for the Provision to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within 1 year of the incident occurring.

If a complaint is older than 1 year it will not be investigated. The Provision will do all it can to resolve concerns or complaints and to ensure parents/carers are happy with the education their child receives at the Provision.

Parents/carers and pupils can be assured that all complaints and expressions of concern, whether raised informally or formally, will be treated seriously and will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. It should also be noted however that malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the Provision.

Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except in so far as is required where disclosure is required in the course of the provision's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Furthermore, a second main aim of the policy is to provide clear guidance for stakeholders on how to make a formal complaint to Blackwell Education and what will happen in the event of a complaint being received.

Purpose of the Policy

The Provision's Policy will:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to understand and use
- be impartial

- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling within established time-limits for action and keep people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the Provision's Director so that services can be improved.

Stages of the Policy

The policy has two main stages which are as follows:

Stage One – Concern is raised informally with class tutor.

Stage Two – Formal complaint - investigated by Director.

1. Stage One

Informal Resolution Discussion with Class Tutor

1.1 It is hoped that most concerns or complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.

1.2 If parents/carers have a concern or complaint they should normally contact their child's class teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved immediately by this means to the parents'/ carers' satisfaction. In some circumstances however, the matter will require investigation or discussion with others and so it may take longer to respond to the parents/carers.

1.3 The Provision will use its reasonable endeavours to resolve any informal concerns or complaints within 10 working days of them being raised, except where they are raised during Provision holidays or within 2 working days of their commencement. In these cases, the Provision will use its reasonable endeavours to resolve the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the commencement of the new term (usually within 10 working days).

1.4 If it is not possible to resolve the matter informally or parents/carers are not satisfied with the result at this stage, then parents/carers will be advised to proceed with their concern or complaint in accordance with Stage Two of this procedure.

2. Stage Two

Formal Resolution Complaint investigated by Director

2.1 If the matter cannot be resolved on an informal basis then parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Director. Parents/carers should identify how they wish their complaint to be resolved.

2.2 The Director may delegate responsibility for undertaking the investigation of the complaint to another member of staff in appropriate circumstances unless the Director deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

2.3 The Director will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action but will endeavour to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.

2.4 In most cases, the Director will meet or speak with the parents/carers concerned to discuss the matter. The Director will use reasonable endeavours to speak to or meet parents/carers within 10 working days of the formal complaint being received. In cases where the complaint is received during Provision holidays or within 2 working days of their commencement, the Director will use his/her reasonable endeavours to speak or meet with parents/carers as soon as possible after the commencement of the new term (usually within 10 working days). It may be necessary for the Director to carry out further investigations.

2.5 The Director will keep a written record of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

2.6 Once the Director is satisfied that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made. Parents/carers will be informed of this decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision including the steps/action the Provision has taken to resolve the issue. The written decision should normally be provided no later than 10 working days after the Director has met with parents/carers to discuss the matter. The Director may also arrange a further meeting with the parents/carers to explain their decision.

2.7 The Provision will keep a written record of all formal complaints, including records of meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, and the Provision's decision, which will be recorded and will be kept for 1 year after the pupil leaves the Provision. This record will state if complaints were resolved at this stage of the policy or whether the matter was taken further.

2.8 Where parents/carers are dissatisfied with the result at Stage Two they should notify the Local Authority as appropriate in writing within 10 working days of receiving the Provision's written response under Stage Two.

Compliments

Compliments are always welcome and can be made formally – either direct to particular members of staff concerned or to the relevant manager or formally through the policy.

- Written compliments may be sent to the below address: Director, Blackwell Education, 117 Greenway Road, Timperley, Altrincham, WA15 6BL

- If you would like to email, please use the following address paulriley@blackwelleducation.org.uk and include "formal compliment" in the subject line.

- On receiving a formal compliment it will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receipt, a copy will be filed centrally and details recorded. A copy will be sent to each member of staff to which the compliment relates and their relevant line manager.