



BIRCHWOOD

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Policy Name	Complaints for Parents
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Implemented by	DC
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Complaints Policy For Parents

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1 Introduction

1.1 We take great care with the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to our pupils. However, if parents do wish to make a complaint, they can expect the following procedure to apply.

1.2 This policy is applicable to all pupils currently on the school roll.

2 Working Day

2.1 For the purposes of this procedure, ‘working days’ shall mean working days during school term time. In the event of a complaint arising during the school holidays, wherever possible, this will maintain the same time periods as during term time. However, the Headteacher will need to ascertain the exact time required to secure the necessary information and, if there is the need to go beyond this time scale, will inform the parents accordingly in writing.

3 Procedure

3.1 Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

3.1.1 It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.

3.1.2 If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact the headteacher in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved at this level to the parents’ satisfaction.

3.1.3 If the headteacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult with a member of the Birchwood Children’s Services.

- 3.1.4 Any complaints made directly to the headteacher will usually be referred back to the relevant member of staff unless the headteacher considers it more appropriate to deal with the matter personally. Should this be the case, the aim will still be to resolve the matter informally. However, the involvement of the Head at this stage will be in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.1.5 Stage 1 complaints should be addressed within 10 working days from the point at which they are received. Where there are reasons that prevent this from happening, the staff member dealing with the complaint will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
- 3.1.6 Should the matter not be resolved informally, despite the headteacher's best efforts, then the parents are able to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

3.2 Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- 3.2.1 If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint informally, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the headteacher the headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take including the person to take the lead in any investigation.
- 3.2.2 The headteacher will respond to parents within five working days indicating how the school proposes to proceed.
- 3.2.3 It may be necessary for the headteacher, or the person taking the lead, to carry out further investigations. If this is the case then written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, during the course of the investigation, a decision will be made in relation to the complaint within 20 working days from the date the complaint was received. Parents will be informed of the decision, and the reasoning behind it, in writing.
- 3.2.4 Where it is not possible to give a full reply within 20 working days, the headteacher will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
- 3.2.5 It is expected that a resolution will be reached at this stage and that parents will feel assured that all of their concerns have been fully and fairly considered. If, in extreme circumstances, parents are not satisfied with the process they are able to bring into play Stage 3 of this procedure.
- 3.2.6 Note: Should a parent wish to raise a complaint about the headteacher; they should contact Birchwood Children's Services by telephone or writing in the first instance. This will trigger contact with a member of Birchwood Children's Services Proprietary Body to clarify and discuss the matter. Where there is a complaint against the headteacher the Proprietary Body will appoint an investigator. These

complaints will normally be dealt with within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

3.3 Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- 3.3.1 Where the parents are not satisfied with the response or process undertaken at Stage 2, the matter will be referred to a Complaints Panel.
- 3.3.2 A complaint form should be delivered by post or by email to Birchwood Children's Services within 5 working days of receipt of the decision at Stage 2 above.
- 3.3.3 Birchwood Children's Services will acknowledge receipt of the Stage 3 complaint and will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 working days of receiving the Stage 3 complaint.
- 3.3.4 The Proprietorial Body will appoint the Complaints Panel and at least one of the three members shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The members of the Complaints Panel will have no connection to the pupil or the family concerned and will not have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The panel will consist of three persons not involved in the complaint.
- 3.3.5 If the Chair of the Complaints Panel deems it necessary, s/he may require that further particulars of the complaint and any relevant documents or records be supplied in advance of the panel meeting. Copies of such particulars will be supplied to all the parties wherever practicable and not later than 3 working days prior to this hearing.
- 3.3.6 The parents may be accompanied to the hearing.
- 3.3.7 If possible, the Complaints Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
- 3.3.8 A written record of the proceedings will be taken.
- 3.3.9 After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing.
- 3.3.10 The Panel will write to the parents informing them of their decision and the reasons for it.
- 3.3.11 The Panel's findings and recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the headteacher and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made. A copy of any complaint and findings/recommendations will

be held confidentially and made available for inspection in the school by the proprietor and by inspectors on request.

3.3.12 This exhausts the complaints procedure after the decision has been communicated in writing. The decision of the Complaints Panel is Final.

4 Recording of Complaints

All complaints that have reached Stages 2 or 3 are duly recorded in the School Complaint Register, including the outcome of the individual complaint and any actions taken as a result. The stage at which the complaint is concluded is recorded.

5 Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. The exceptions to confidentiality are the Secretary of State or an inspection body. The School will make available to an inspectorate on request a written record of any complaints made during a specified period and the action that was taken as a result.

6 Publication

This procedure is available from Birchwood School office upon request.

7 Reviewing history

Date	Changes made	Signature
09.12.20	Ratified by Proprietorial Body	GovCom
January 2022	No changes necessary	DC
Jan 23	No changes required	DC
Nov 23	Updated names (V2)	DC
March 2024	Reviewed	RH
Jan 2025	Updated term Proprietorial Body (V3)	DC
Feb 2025	Ratified	SP
January 2026	No changes required	DC

8. Appendix

Complaints log template

Date	Name of Complainant	Nature of Complaint	Initial Action	Outcome	Signature

	Name	Signature	Date	Department
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