



Complaints Policy

September 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 For the purpose of this procedure, the definition of the term 'parent' is as follows:
A person who has parental responsibility (i.e. legal responsibility for the Child) and is entitled to receive relevant information concerning the Child.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, however, a complaint cannot be made if the child is not on the roll of the school.
- 1.4 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 the same time periods will be maintained as during term time. However, the member of staff who is investigating the complaint 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.
- 1.5 Anonymous complaints will not be investigated under the procedures laid out in this policy. The school does not support or encourage anonymous complaints which are, by their nature, significantly harder to address. In exceptional cases, the Headteacher, or Chair of Governors, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

2 Complaints Procedure

- 2.0 It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly, informally and within the school management structures.

2.1 Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- 2.1.1 If parents have a complaint, they should contact their child's class teacher/form tutor in the first instance. The child's class teacher/form tutor will be responsible for determining the appropriate course of action to support resolving the parent's complaint. The child's class teacher/form tutor will endeavour to resolve the complaint by way of a discussion in the first instance. This is referred to as Stage 1 of the complaints process. In most cases, the matter will be resolved at this level to the parents' satisfaction. The matter should be documented and clearly identified as a Stage 1 Complaint. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, this is handled by the Chair of Governors and the same Stage 1 procedure will apply.
- 2.1.2 If the class teacher/form tutor cannot resolve the matter, it may be necessary for them to consult with a member of the School Senior Leadership Team. The Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for determining the appropriate course of action to support resolving the parent's complaint. This may include:
 - organising a discussion between the parents and relevant staff member(s) in response to the complaint; or
 - escalating the matter to Stage 2, which is still managed within School
- 2.1.3 Any Stage 1 complaint made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred back to the relevant staff member(s) or SLT unless the Headteacher considers it more appropriate to deal with the matter personally. Should this be the case, the Headteacher will still endeavour to resolve the matter by scheduling a discussion with the parents. The involvement of the Headteacher at this stage will be in exceptional circumstances.

- 2.1.4 Stage 1 complaints should be addressed within 7 working days from the point at which they are received. Where there are reasons which prevent this from happening, the staff member dealing with the complaint will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
- 2.1.5 A written record of all Stage 1 complaints will be kept (regardless of whether they are upheld) by the school and this will include the date on which the complaint was received, the action taken and the outcome.
- 2.1.6 Should the matter not be resolved at Stage 1, despite the school's best efforts, then the parents are able to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

2.2 Stage 2 – Formal Resolution – School Level

- 2.2.1 If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint at Stage 1, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, it should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors, and the same Stage 2 procedure will apply. 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.
- 2.2.2 The Headteacher will respond to parents within seven working days indicating how the school proposes to proceed.
- 2.2.3 It may be necessary for the Headteacher, or a member of the SLT, 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.
- 2.2.4 Once the Headteacher is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established during the course of the investigation (so far as is practicable), a decision will be made in relation to the complaint within 15 working days from the date the complaint was escalated to the Headteacher. The Parents, along with the governors will be informed of the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation.
- 2.2.5 Where it is not possible to give a full reply within 15 working days (for example, due to school holidays), the Headteacher will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
- 2.2.6 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 this process, they are able to escalate this matter further in accordance with Stage 3 of this procedure. This will involve referring the matter to a Complaints Panel.

2.3 Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- 2.3.1 Parents should request a referral to the Chair of Governors in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the decision at Stage 2 above.
- 2.3.2 The Chair of Governors 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 request to escalate the matter to Stage 3.
- 2.3.3 A Complaints Panel, including a designated panel Chair, will be appointed by the Chair of Governors and at least one of the three members shall be independent of the management and running of the school and of Redshift Education. The members of the Complaints Panel

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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.

- 2.3.4 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.
- 2.3.5 The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation is not permitted. Recordings of hearings are not permitted.
- 2.3.6 If possible, the Complaints Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
- 2.3.7 A written record of the proceedings will be taken.
- 2.3.8 After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations in response to the complaint, which shall be shared with the complainant(s) within 10 working days of the hearing. The Chair of the Panel will write to the parents informing them of their decision in relation to the complaint and the reasoning for this decision.
- 2.3.9 The Panel's findings and recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant and the Headteacher. 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.
- 2.3.10 After this decision has been communicated in writing, the complaints procedure has now been exhausted.
- 2.3.11 The decision of the Complaints Panel is final.

3. Early Years

- 3.1 This policy is compliant with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where parents believe that the school is not fulfilling the requirements of the EYFS they are entitled to raise concerns with either ISI or Ofsted (see below for contact details). All complaints relating to the EYFS are investigated and complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. Where parents do not believe that an early year's complaint has been resolved they can raise this with Ofsted via email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or telephone 0300 123 1231. All paperwork with regard to complaints to Ofsted will be kept by the school for 3 years.

4 Vexatious Complaints

- 4.1 There may be exceptional occasions when, despite the following of all stages of the procedure, the complainant remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors reserves the right to inform the complainant in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed. Where a complainant seeks to raise a subsequent complaint matter which is otherwise different to the original complaint at Stage 3, this matter in itself would be treated as a new at Stage 1 complaint.

5 Recording of Complaints

- 5.1 All complaints which 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.

6 Confidentiality

- 6.1 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 which was taken as a result.

7 Publication

- 7.1 This procedure is published on the school website.

8 Provisions Relating to Complaints dealt with using this Procedure

- 8.1 This procedure will not be relevant where other statutory or organisational provisions apply, for example, child protection, racial incidents or special educational provision. If concerns relate to child protection matters, the appropriate Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures will be followed.
- 8.2 This procedure cannot be used to deal with appeals following expulsion or removal. There is a separate procedure in place in accordance with the parent contract. Guidance on how to request this will be provided in the event of an exclusion or removal and is covered in the Exclusion Policy.
- 8.3 Nothing in this policy shall prejudice the right of parents of a pupil with SEN or a disability to seek redress from the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if they believe their child has received unfavourable treatment.
- 8.4 A complaint can be made by any parent (or person deemed to have parental responsibility under the terms of the Children Act 2004) of a pupil registered at the school.

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- 8.5 When the complaint concerns only the matter of finance such as fees in lieu which remain outstanding, the matter of the fees owed alone falls outside the scope of this procedure. The Headteacher of the School remains responsible for all financial decisions.
- 8.6 Where a parent is unhappy with this procedure, they can contact the Department for Education (DfE).
- 8.7 Complaints from groups of parents about the school will not be heard collectively. Confidentiality must be maintained for each individual complainant.

Contact details for inspectorates:

The Independent School Inspectorate: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA
Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Complaint record from previous academic year 2024-2025:

Number of Stage 2 Complaints: 0

Number of Stage 3 Complaints: 0

The school received no formal complaints.

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