



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

SCOPE

The Complaints Procedure exists to enable those concerns of parents, carers and others, which cannot be resolved through informal discussion, to be investigated and, if possible, resolved.

The Complaints Procedure is not open to employees of Bright Futures School in respect of matters relating to their employment.

Complaints made under this procedure may relate to any aspect of the school's services to children and families.

Complaints made about the behaviour of a staff member will be investigated and addressed under school's personnel procedures.

Making your concerns known

We need to know if you are concerned about any aspect of the school's provision, especially in relation to your own child. We cannot deal with problems if you do not tell us about them. Complaints need to be considered, and resolved, as quickly and efficiently as possible. Our complaints procedure outlines the different stages of the process and what the expectations are at the end of each stage.

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

Your complaint or concern should be discussed with the Head of Learning. Most difficulties are resolved at this stage. If you are not able to come into the school you can also put your concerns in writing. It is anticipated that most issues can be resolved through a constructive dialogue and without recourse to formal procedures. However, if the issue is not resolved you should refer your concerns in writing to the Head of Development (Stage 2) within 5 working days of the meeting with the Head of Learning.

Stage 2 – Written response from the Head of Development to your written concerns

The Head of Development will undertake any further investigation that is necessary and respond in writing within 10 working days of receiving your written outline of outstanding complaint/s. If the matter is complex, and this timescale cannot be met, you will be notified and kept informed of progress.

If you are not satisfied with the Head of Development's written response at Stage 2, you will have 10 working days from the date of School's Stage 2 response to outline in writing any issues that you are still dissatisfied with and why, and to request that the complaint proceeds to Stage 3: Complaints Panel.

Your outline of outstanding concerns will not include any new matters of complaint, or any issues not already raised in your Stage 1 complaint.

If you do not reply within the 10 day timeframe, then the complaint case will be closed.

Stage 3 – Complaints Panel

The panel will comprise 3 people who have had no previous involvement in your complaint, and at least 2 of whom have no immediate connection to Bright Futures School Limited.

This panel will consider the information and evidence already submitted by you and by the school at complaint stages 1 and 2. The Panel reserves the right to request further information from school at this stage in response to your concerns that are still outstanding.

No new issues of complaint will be accepted at this stage and only evidence directly related to the complaint issues already outlined by you will be accepted.

It may take some time to identify panel members but this will be done as quickly as practically possible. The panel will be convened within 15 working days of being established.

The Chair of the panel will write to you in advance of the panel meeting, asking for any evidence that you have not already submitted to substantiate any of the comments/allegations you are making.

Once the Chair is in receipt of any evidence you submit, this will be shared with the school. The school will be given time (to be decided by the Chair) to prepare a response to the evidence that you submit.

There will be a deadline for submission of evidence from both parties. The Chair will determine the deadline and any information submitted after this date will not be heard by the panel.

The Chair will then inform you of a date for the panel meeting.

The framework for the complaint panel hearing is available from school on request at any time. It will be sent to the complainant/s by the panel Chair ahead of a Stage 3 complaint meeting.

Following the panel meeting, the Chair of the panel will write to you outlining the findings and recommendation/s of the panel within 5 working days of the hearing. If the matter is complex, and this timescale cannot be met, you will be notified and kept informed of progress.

If the complaint involves a member of staff at school, that person will also be entitled to receive a copy of the complaint.

A copy of the findings and recommendations from any complaint will be made available at the school site.

A written record will be kept in school of any/all complaints that have been made; whether and at what stage they were resolved; together with a record of any action the school took as a result of the complaint (whether or not the complaint was upheld).

All correspondence, statements and records relating to any complaints will be kept confidential but may be shared with an Ofsted Inspector during an HMI inspection.

Further Appeal

The decision of the Complaints Panel is the final stage in the consideration of your complaint. However, there may be circumstances in which it would be appropriate for you to raise your concerns with Oldham Council or the Department for Education or OFSTED, who are unable to investigate the complaint, but can check that the complaints procedure has been followed correctly. You should seek

advice from those bodies as to whether your complaint falls within their scope for consideration.

Vexatious, Serial & Persistent or Unreasonable Complaints

The School recognises the importance of the Complaints Procedure. We are also aware that on rare occasions complainants may seek to use the procedure to raise frivolous issues, may not engage with the process in a constructive way or may seek to re-open issues which have already been resolved. In these exceptional circumstances, the Head of Development will submit the details to the Complaints Panel and ask for a decision as to whether or not the complainant should be excluded from the complaints process or for direction on any conditions that may be attached to future complaints from that person.

Covert recordings and the complaints process

Complainants should obtain the informed consent of all parties before recording conversations or meetings.

The school reserves the right to refuse permission for a complainant to use a recording that has been obtained covertly to substantiate any part of the complaint. This is supported by the DfE's guidance on best practice for dealing with complaints.

Number of complaints

2020-2021	One No action taken
2021-2022	None
2022-2023	One Complaint procedure revised and updated
2023-2024	