



## **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, or the behaviour of any member of staff.

### **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 – Investigation by the Head of Development**

On receipt of your concerns in writing, the Head of Development will undertake an investigation and seek to resolve your concerns. You will receive a written response of the outcomes of the investigation within 5 working days from receipt of your concerns in writing.

If the matter is complex, and this timescale cannot be met, you will be notified and kept informed of progress.

You will have 2 weeks from the date of School's response in order to reply to school's response (both initial response and any subsequent responses). If you do not reply within that timeframe then the complaint case will be closed.

Should you still be dissatisfied, you should move to stage 3 of our procedure, as described below.

### **Stage 3 – Complaints Panel**

If you feel the Head of Development's response has not satisfactorily addressed your complaint, you can submit a written request for a formal hearing of your complaint by a 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 evidence submitted by you and by the school.

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 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 relates to 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 in the complaints process. This is supported by the DfE's guidance on best practice for dealing with complaints.

**Number of complaints**

<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>One</b>
<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>One</b>
<b>2023-2024</b>	

Reviewed and updated September 2023	L Whalley, Z Thompson
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