Broomfield House School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

This Procedure, (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and upon request a copy may be obtained from the School Office Email: office@broomfieldhouse.com

A copy is also provided in the information for prospective parents and guardians, on enquiry for admission. The purpose of this complaints procedure is to deal with complaints from the parents of pupils. This complaints procedure does not apply to parents of prospective pupils and it does not cover exclusions. This complaints procedure does apply to past pupils but only if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still a registered child at Broomfield House School.

Legal Status: This procedure incorporates the manner in which complaints are to be managed in accordance with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) regulations.

Timescale: The process of dealing with a complaint in writing from the moment that it is received by the school to resolution will take no more than twenty-eight (28) working days except in circumstances in which the normal timescales are affected by issues that delay resolution; namely school holidays and other factors. However**,** if the complaint relates to the delivery of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** at Broomfield, the school will ensure that all stages of the complaint will be completed within twenty-eight 28 calendar days whether inside or outside of term time.

Monitoring and Review: The Headteacher monitors the complaints procedure, to ensure that all complaints are handled properly and also undertakes a formal annual review of this procedure, for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Last reviewed: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

Introduction: Broomfield House School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, guardians and pupils and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. Our reputation is important and it is in the interest of the school to deal with any concerns promptly. If parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated seriously by the School in accordance with this Procedure. We resolve complaints to the parents' satisfaction, or with an appropriate outcome, which balances the rights and duties of pupils who are not penalised for making a complaint. We are open about our decisions and actions, explaining our rationale. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records at which stage and how they were resolved. The record includes, at least: the person making the complaint, the date of the complaint, the nature of the complaint, any action taken and the outcome of the complaint.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, which needs a response.
We wish to ensure that:

- parents and pupils wishing to make a complaint know how to do so;
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way and
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously, taking action where appropriate.

A complaint is likely to arise when there are issues of physical or emotional well-being and security at stake, or when the school's stated aims or values are being ignored. A breach of the law will always constitute a complaint. We handle each complaint fairly, confidentially, using the agreed time frame. Throughout the process we listen, learn, admit mistakes, address issues raised, apologise and change practices and procedures, if appropriate. At all stages in the complaints process a written record is to be kept of the date a resolution was reached and the agreed nature of this. The parents will then be informed in writing.

"How should I complain?"
Stage 1 – Informal Resolution *(References to the number of working days refer to term-time only)*
It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. Pupils should raise all complaints with their form teacher in the first instance. In the case of parents, any member of staff will be happy to help but it may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue. They will keep a dated record. You can also write a letter or telephone.

"What will happen next?" If you raise something face to face or by telephone it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction. If you have made a complaint in writing or via e-mail, we will respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed. In addition, a copy of your letter or your e-mail will be placed in the confidential Comments and Complaints file. This is to ensure we follow up any actions. In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given an indication of when you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible and usually within seven (7) school days. This will tell you the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it and any action taken or proposed.

"What happens about confidentiality?" Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Headteacher and those directly involved, except in the circumstances required by law or school inspection. It is the school's policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children. We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the Police. You would be informed. While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints may not be pursued. However, serious complaints such as those raising allegations will be followed up. Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

"What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?" We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered. Should the matter not be resolved to your satisfaction within seven (7) school days, then parents are to advance to the formal complaints stage of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution: *(References to the number of working days refer to term-time only)* If parents seek to invoke Stage 2 (following a failure to reach resolution at the Informal Stage), they should write or email in the first instance to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will either meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within three (3) school days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. The Headteacher will establish what has happened so far and who has been involved; clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved and what the parents feels would resolve the issue. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations. Written records will be kept by the Headteacher of all meetings and interviews with regard to the complaint. Once all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made by the Headteacher and parents will be informed of this decision in writing or by email within fourteen (14) days. The reasons for the decision will also be given.

Should a parent or guardian have a complaint about the Headteacher, the person making the complaint should inform Mr Tim Fish our CEO at Dukes Education, 58 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6AJ or Tim.fish@dukeseducation.com.

Stage 3 - Complaints Panel

1 What is a Complaints Panel hearing?

1.1 A Complaints Panel hearing is a review of the decisions taken at Stage 2 by the Head (or in circumstances where the formal complaint concerns the Head, a director is appointed to act in his / her place). The Panel will not consider any new areas of complaint which have not been previously raised as part of the complaints procedure.

1.2 The role of the Panel is to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made by considering:

1.2.1 the documents provided by both parties and

1.2.2 any representations made by the Parents and the Head

and to reach a decision, on the balance of probabilities, as to whether each complaint is made out in whole or in part.

1.3 It is not within the powers of the Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, pupils or parents. The Panel may make recommendations to the School on these matters or any other issues as appropriate.

2 How to request a Complaints Panel hearing

2.1 A request for a hearing before the Complaints Panel must be put in writing to complaints@dukeseducation.com within five working days of the decision complained of. The request will usually only be considered if the procedures at Stages 1 and 2 have been completed.

2.2 The written request should include:

2.2.1 a copy of all relevant documents and full contact details

2.2.2 details of all the grounds of the complaint and the outcome desired

2.2.3 a list of the documents which the parents believe to be in the School's possession and wish the Panel to see and

2.2.4 whether you propose to be accompanied to the hearing by someone who is legally qualified (see paragraph 3.3 below).

2.3 If assistance with the request is required, for example because of a disability, please inform us of this and we will be happy to make appropriate arrangements.

2.4 We will acknowledge the request for a hearing in writing within two working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays.

2.5 Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 15 working days of receipt of the request. However, note that the Panel will not normally sit during half terms or school holidays.

3 Planning the hearing

3.1 As soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event at least ten working days before the hearing, we will send written notification to each party of the date, time and place of the hearing.

3.2 Copies of any additional documents you wish the Panel to consider should be sent to the complaints@dukeseducation.com to be received at least five working days prior to the hearing.

3.3 You may be accompanied to the hearing by another person, for example a relative, teacher or friend. The Panel hearing is not legal proceedings and so legal representation is not necessary. If you do wish to be accompanied by someone who is legally qualified, you should have notified us of this in your initial request for a Panel hearing. If you did not do so and you wish to be accompanied by a legally qualified person, you must inform us of this at least five working days prior to the hearing and the parents should note that the Panel will wish to speak to them directly and this person will not be permitted to act as an advocate.

3.4 We will circulate a copy of the bundle of documents to be considered by the Panel to all parties at least three working days prior to the hearing.

4 Composition of the Panel

4.1 The Panel will comprise of at least three individuals who have no detailed prior knowledge of the circumstances on the complaint, including at least one panel member who is independent of the management and running of Broomfield House School and where appropriate the Dukes Education Group.

4.2 The parents may ask who has been appointed to sit on the Panel ahead of the hearing.

4.3 The Panel members will choose one of themselves to be the Chair of the Panel throughout the proceedings.

5 The Panel hearing

5.1 The hearing will be conducted in an informal manner.

5.2 All those present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments in an appropriate manner. The hearing is not a legal proceeding and the Panel shall be under no obligation to hear oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and / or may take written statements into account.

5.3 All statements made at the hearing will be unsworn. All present will be entitled, should they wish, to write their own notes for reference purposes. A clerk appointed by the Panel will take handwritten minutes of the proceedings.

5.4 All those attending the hearing are expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners or, after due warning, the hearing may be adjourned or terminated at the discretion of the Chair. If terminated, the original decision will stand. Any person who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the way the hearing is conducted must say so before the proceedings go any further and his / her comment will be minuted.

5.5 The Chair may, at his / her discretion, adjourn the hearing for further investigation of any relevant issue. This may include an adjournment to take legal advice.

5.6 A hearing before the Complaints Panel is a private proceeding. No notes or other records or oral statements about any matter discussed in or arising from the proceeding shall be made available directly or indirectly to the press or other media.

6 The decision

6.1 The Panel will reach a decision on a balance of probabilities unless there is an agreed position.

6.2 The decision, findings and any recommendations will be confirmed in writing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; by electronic mail, normally within five working days of the hearing. If the parents do not wish to receive the decision by electronic mail, they should inform us of this so that a copy may be given or posted to them.

6.3 The decisions, findings and any recommendations will also be available for inspection on the School premises by the Proprietor and the Head.

6.4 Actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint regardless of the findings will also be recorded in the complaints log.

6.5 The completion of Stage 3 represents the conclusion of the School's complaints procedure.

Summary of Time Scales

During School Time:

- *Stage 1 Informal resolution:* Resolved in seven (7) days or progress to Stage 2
- *Stage 2 Formal resolution:* Response to parents within three (3) days for meeting to resolve. If still unresolved or a further investigation needed, a letter from the Headteacher will be received by the parents within fourteen (14) days of the initial meeting.
- *Stage 3 Panel Hearing:* A request for a hearing before the Complaints Panel must be put in writing within five working days of the decision complained of. Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 15 working days of receipt of the request. Copies of the particulars of the complaint are supplied to all parties not later than five (5) days prior to the hearing. If possible, the parent's complaint will be resolved immediately. If further investigation is required, a decision will be sent within five (5) days of the hearing.

During Holiday Periods: (Also refer to page 1 of this procedure regarding the EYFS). The complaint will normally be resolved within twenty-eight (28) days of the lodging of the complaint to its resolution whenever possible. Allowable exceptions to this rule are for instances when persons involved in the complaint are unavailable during holiday periods. In this case the parents will be kept informed. However, as far as possible, the meeting should not be delayed if the referral comes at the end of term, especially at the end of the Summer Term. Since the aim of the procedure is to resolve the issue and effect reconciliation, if necessary, it will be best if the matter can come to the Panel as quickly as possible, especially if the parents will already have been engaged over a longer period in attempts to put things right.

Record keeping for the Whole School: A written record is kept by the Headteacher of all complaints whether they are resolved at the informal stage or following a formal procedure, or proceeding to a panel hearing, for a minimum of seven years. The record includes, at least:

- date when the issue was raised; name of parent, name of pupil, description of the issue;
- records of all the investigations (if appropriate), witness statements (if appropriate);
- name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage;
- any action taken and the outcome of the complaint (regardless of whether they are upheld);
- written record of when a final outcome was reached and
- copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversation).

Additionally, the Proprietor examines this written record on an annual basis, providing, on request to ISI and/or Ofsted, a written record of all complaints made during a specified period and the action that was taken as a result of each complaint.

Child Protection: For any complaint that involves a potential child protection issue, this must be reported immediately to the Headteacher (See our Child Protection Policy for details of the procedure).

Parents of Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are also entitled to make a complaint to Ofsted (The regulatory authority) or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) (The inspecting authority) about the provision. The contact details for both organisations are:

- **Ofsted**, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.
  Telephone: 0300 123 4666 Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk
- **Independent Schools inspectorate**, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA,
- Telephone: 02076 000100 or to concerns@isi.net

If parents believe that Broomfield House School is not meeting the EYFS requirements they can also make a complaint to Achieving for Children at the London Borough of Richmond or Ofsted should they wish to; the relevant contact details are: **Achieving for Children**, London Borough of Richmond, Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ.
Telephone: 020 8891 1411
Web:www.achievingforchildren.org.uk Email:early.years@achievingforchildren.org.uk

The number of formal complaints registered in the academic year September 2024 to August 25 is four.

The School recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 act requests access to them.

Complaints Received Under Formal Procedure (from September 2010)

In Broomfield House School, the complaints logged here are the serious complaints which have reached stage 2 of the school's complaints process. This is the stage after the informal stage 1 when a concern or worry is voiced to the school either to the teacher or the Headteacher.

Academic Year	Total Number of Complaints	Number of Stage 2 Complaints		Number of Stage 3 Complaints	
		Early Years	Key Stage 1 and 2	Early Years	Key Stage 1 and 2
2010-2011	0	0	0	0	0
2011-2012	0	0	0	0	0
2012-2013	0	0	0	0	0
2013-2014	0	0	0	0	0
2014-2015	1	0	1	0	0
2015-2016	1	0	1	0	0
2016-2017	2	1	1	0	0
2017-2018	2	0	2	0	0
2018-2019	0	0	0	0	0
2019-2020	1	1	0	0	0
2020-2021	1	0	1	0	0
2021-2022	0	0	0	0	0
2022-2023	1	0	1	0	0
2023-2024	7	0	6	0	0
2024-2025	4	0	2	0	0