

# Brompton Community Primary School

## Complaints Policy



Approved by:

**School and Governing Body**

Last Reviewed on:

**September 2026**

Next Review due:

**September 2027**

**Mrs Bianca James**

This policy is written in line with current UK legislation and guidance, including:

- Education Act 2002 (section 29 and associated duties)
- School Information (England) Regulations (as amended)
- DfE guidance on school complaints procedures
- Standards for British Schools Overseas (where applicable)
- Guidance from the Maintained Schools: Governance Guide (governors' duty to publish complaints procedures)
- Relevant data protection, equality and safeguarding legislation and guidance

Framework note: This policy is aligned with the expectations of inspection frameworks including Ofsted. Where relevant, leaders should ensure complaint records are made available to inspectors if requested.

We aim to work closely with everyone to ensure that all children can learn, be safe and happy in school and be part of an inclusive environment where everyone thrives.

We view all complaints in a positive way, as it helps the school improve its practices.

However, sometimes problems do occur and the best person to talk to first if you have a child in school is usually your child's class teacher. If you do not have a child in school please talk to the Headteacher.

If you are still worried or concerned, the Headteacher will be happy to talk to you at a mutually convenient time. Please contact the school office to make an appointment to talk to the Headteacher or write to the Headteacher, explaining your complaint and what you would like to happen now.

This is part of a full procedure which all schools have in place and has been approved by the Governing Board. If the Headteacher cannot resolve the issue or if the complaint is about the Headteacher you should then write to the Chair of Governors. If your complaint is about a governor or governors please write to the Clerk of the Governing Board through the school.

Full details of our complaints procedure can be found in this policy or on the school's website for further information.

Please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## Purpose and principles

### Purpose

- To set out Brompton Community Primary School's procedure for handling complaints from parents, pupils, staff, governors, and members of the wider community.
- To ensure complaints are dealt with fairly, consistently, promptly and in a way that provides effective redress where appropriate.
- To enable the school to learn from complaints and to use that learning to improve the quality of education, pastoral care and the school environment.

### Principles

- Accessibility: information about how to make a complaint is transparent and easy to find (published online and available in school office).
- Timeliness: complaints will be handled quickly, with clear timescales at each stage.
- Impartiality: complaints will be investigated fairly and without bias.
- Confidentiality: details are shared on a need-to-know basis and records handled in line with data protection law.
- Openness: outcomes and recommended actions are communicated to complainants and relevant staff.
- Proportionate: response and remedy are proportionate to the complaint.
- Right to be accompanied: complainants may bring a companion to meetings.
- No detriment: complainants and pupils will not be penalised for raising a complaint in good faith.

## Scope

### This policy covers:

- Complaints relating to the school's provision of education, pastoral support, behaviour management, policies, communications, school trips and activities, administration and the conduct of staff and contractors.
- Complaints from parents/carers, pupils, staff, governors and members of the public.

### It does not cover:

- Staff grievances or disciplinary matters (these have separate procedures).
- Child protection concerns (these follow the school's safeguarding policy and must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead).
- Admissions appeals (which follow statutory appeal routes).
- Exclusions (statutory procedures separate from this complaints process).
- Freedom of Information and Data Protection requests (separate procedures).

| • Exceptions                                                                                                    | Who to contact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Admissions to schools<br>Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs<br>School re-organisation proposals | Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re- organisation proposals should be raised with <a href="https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning">https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning</a> |

|                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation                                      | <p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding</p> <p>LADO Contact Number 01609 532477</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Exclusion of children from school*                                                              | <p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure. <a href="http://brompton.n-yorks.sch.uk/">http://brompton.n-yorks.sch.uk/</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Whistleblowing                                                                                  | <p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p> |
| Staff grievances                                                                                | <p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Staff conduct                                                                                   | <p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities | <p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| National Curriculum - content                                                                   | <p>Please contact the Department for Education at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



## **Roles and responsibilities**

### Governing Body

- Approve and review the complaints policy annually.
- Ensure the school publishes the complaints procedure (website and on request).
- Appoint a Complaints Panel (at least three people, one independent of school management).
- Ensure at least one panel member is independent of the running of the school.

### Headteacher

- Ensure the policy is implemented and that staff know how to respond to and record complaints.
- Take responsibility for resolving complaints at informal and early formal stages where appropriate.
- Maintain the central complaints log and ensure complainants are kept informed.

### School Office Manager (Mrs Pennett)

- Act as first point of contact for receipt and acknowledgement of complaints.
- Maintain records, timescales and correspondence.
- Coordinate meetings and documentation for panel hearings.

### Investigating Officer (where required)

- Conduct timely, impartial investigations and prepare reports for the headteacher or panel.
- Make recommendations for remedial actions.

### Clerk to the Governing Body (for panel hearings)

- Arrange panel meetings, circulate papers, and record decisions and recommendations.

### Staff

- Attempt to resolve issues raised by pupils, parents or carers promptly and courteously.
- Inform the headteacher or complaints coordinator of emerging concerns.

### Complainant (parent, carer, pupil, member of public)

- Provide clear details of the complaint, desired outcome and any supporting evidence.
- Engage with the process in good faith and meet agreed timescales.



## **Complaints procedure: overview and timescales**

### Principles on timescales

- Acknowledgement: within 5 school days.
- Informal resolution aimed for: within 10 school days of initial contact.
- Formal Stage (written complaint): investigation completed within 20 school days.
- Panel hearing: held within 20 school days of receiving a written request for a panel hearing (or earlier if possible).
- Where timescales cannot be met, the school will notify the complainant with revised timescales and reasons.

Note: Days refer to school days during term-time. Where complaints are received during school holidays, timescales will commence on the first school day after the holiday unless otherwise agreed.

### **Withdrawal of a Complaint**

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

#### Stage 0 — Early resolution / Informal (encouraged)

- Many concerns can be resolved informally by speaking with the relevant class teacher or member of staff.
- Complainants should make contact promptly by phone, email or in person and outline the issue and desired outcome (please check the communications policy on clear guidance regarding who to contact and how).
- The member of staff will attempt early resolution and should keep a brief log of actions and outcome.
- If not resolved within 10 school days, or the complainant is dissatisfied, proceed to Stage 1 (formal).

#### Stage 1 — Formal written complaint (to the Headteacher)

- The complaint must be made in writing (letter, email or complaint form) and addressed to the Headteacher.
- The complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school days.
- The Headteacher (or designated investigating officer) will investigate: meet with complainant and relevant staff, review records, and gather evidence.
- The Headteacher will provide a written outcome report within 20 school days of acknowledgement, stating findings, reasons and any actions/remedies.
- If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a panel hearing (Stage 2).

#### Stage 2 — Panel hearing (governors' complaints panel)



- The complainant must write to the Chair of the Governing Body (via the school office) within 10 school days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome requesting a panel hearing. The request should state grounds for appeal and desired outcomes.
- The clerk will convene a panel of at least three people unfamiliar with the complaint and must include one person independent of the school's management and running.
- Papers (complaint, headteacher's report and any supporting documents) will be circulated to all parties at least 5 school days before the hearing.
- The panel will:
  - Consider the complaint and hear representations from the complainant and the school.
  - Ask questions to clarify evidence.
  - Decide on findings and, if appropriate, recommend actions.
- The panel's decision will be recorded in writing and provided to the complainant, the headteacher, and where relevant the person complained about, within 10 school days of the hearing.
- The panel's decision is final within school processes. Complainants will be informed of other avenues (see "Escalation" section).

## **Investigation and panel hearing: detailed process**

### Investigations (Stage 1)

- Appoint an investigator (if required) who is impartial and has not previously been directly involved in the matter.
- Agree terms of reference and scope with the complainant.
- Gather documents, statements and any relevant evidence.
- Offer the complainant a meeting to present their case and any witnesses if appropriate.
- Keep accurate, dated notes and a clear audit trail of communications.

### Panel hearing process (Stage 2)

- The clerk arranges a mutually convenient date and venue (in school or virtually).
- Parties may be accompanied by a friend or representative (not a legal representative except in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement).
- The order of proceedings is set out in the panel pack; the panel chair has discretion to manage the meeting and ensure fairness.
- The panel can:
  - Dismiss the complaint in whole or part.
  - Uphold the complaint in whole or part.
  - Make recommendations for action and learning (both for complainant and school).



- The panel's written decision will include:
  - Summary of complaint and findings
  - Conclusions and reasoning
  - Any actions to be taken
  - Timescales for actions and by whom
  - Note of rights for escalation if applicable

## **Confidentiality, record-keeping and data protection**

### Confidentiality

- The school will treat complaints and related records as confidential, with access on a need-to-know basis.
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where UK or host country law permits access or where a safeguarding concern requires disclosure.

### Record-keeping

- The school will maintain a central complaints log recording:
  - Date received
  - Complainant name and contact details
  - Nature of complaint
  - Stage reached and outcome (resolved at informal/formal/panel)
  - Actions taken and learning outcomes
  - Dates of correspondence and meetings
- Records of complaints will be kept for a minimum of 6 years in line with school record retention schedules and data protection requirements (or in line with local authority guidance if different).

### Data protection

- Records will be processed and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR.
- Complainants will be informed of how we use their personal data and their rights under data protection legislation.

## **Vexatious, malicious or repeated complaints**

- The school will not normally limit access to the complaints procedure but may take action regarding vexatious, malicious, or unreasonably persistent complainants.



- The governing body will review any complainant the school are suggesting as being vexatious, malicious or unreasonably persistent before imposing the below actions.
- Actions may include:
  - Informing the complainant they will not receive further communication except in a defined capacity (with reasons).
  - Restricting contact to a single point (e.g., School Office Manager) and to written correspondence only.
  - Refusing to consider further complaints on the same issue that have been previously fully investigated and concluded.
- Any such decision will be recorded and shared with the complainant explaining the reasons and right to escalate to an external body if appropriate.

## **Safeguarding and whistleblowing**

### **Safeguarding**

- If at any stage a complaint indicates a safeguarding concern, the matter will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and handled under the safeguarding procedures. This may result in pausing the complaints process while safeguarding investigation takes place.

### **Whistleblowing**

- Staff concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice or safeguarding should be raised under the school's whistleblowing policy or with appropriate external bodies where necessary.

## **Links with other policies and external escalation**

### **Related internal policies**

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Staff Grievance & Disciplinary Policies
- Exclusions Policy
- Data Protection / GDPR Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equalities & Inclusion Policy

### **External escalation routes**

- For maintained schools, complainants can contact the local authority for advice.



- Ofsted: In certain circumstances Ofsted may consider complaints about a school to decide whether an inspection is required; it cannot investigate individual issues but may use qualifying complaints as part of inspection evidence. Governing bodies must provide information to Ofsted when requested.
- Department for Education (DfE): where complaints raise matters about compliance with statutory duties.  
The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by Brompton Community Primary School. They will consider whether Brompton Community Primary School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus), by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD.

- Local Government Ombudsman: where complaints concern maladministration by a local authority (rare for maintained schools).
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO): for data protection concerns.

## **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

- The Headteacher will present a termly summary of complaints to the Governing Body (maintaining confidentiality) that includes:
  - Number and types of complaints
  - Stages reached and outcomes
  - Any trends or repeated issues
  - Actions taken and impact on practice
- The Governing Body will review the complaints policy annually and after significant incidents or legislative changes.
- Learning from complaints will be integrated into school improvement planning, staff professional development and policy updates.
- How is learning from complaints communicated and embedded into CPD and improvement plans?

## **Accessibility and supporting complainants**

- Assistance will be provided to complainants who need help in making a complaint, including support for parents with limited English or literacy.



- Where a complainant is a pupil, the school will ensure the pupil is supported and their views are given appropriate weight according to age and understanding.
- Complainants may bring a supporter to meetings; we will not normally permit legal representation unless exceptional circumstances are agreed in advance.

## **Appendix**



### Formal Complaint Form

Please complete and return to either the Headteacher / Chair of Governors / Clerk who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

|                                                     |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name:</b>                                        |  |
| <b>Address</b>                                      |  |
| <b>Postcode:</b>                                    |  |
| <b>Pupil's Name<br/>(if applicable)</b>             |  |
| <b>Telephone Number –<br/>Daytime/Mobile</b>        |  |
| <b>Telephone Number –<br/>Evening</b>               |  |
| <b>Email Address:</b>                               |  |
| <b>Relationship to the pupil<br/>(if relevant):</b> |  |

**Please provide details of your concern/complaint including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.**

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**What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?**

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**Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.**

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name: (please print)</b>       |  |
| <b>Signed:</b>                    |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                      |  |
| <b>Official Use</b>               |  |
| <b>Date acknowledgement sent:</b> |  |
| <b>By whom:</b>                   |  |
| <b>Complaint referred to:</b>     |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                      |  |