ACHIEVE BEYOND SCHOOLS

"We R.A.I.S.E. each other"

Complaints Procedure

Independent School Standards: paragraphs 32(3), 33 and 34
Summary of the number of complaints registered and resolved under our formal complaints procedure during the preceding school year (ISS 32(3)(f))

N/A

Latest review and update	September 2026
Next external review and update	September 2027

AIM

Achieve Beyond Schools are committed to providing a safe, respectful and high-quality learning and mentoring environment for all pupils. We recognise that pupils, parents, carers, schools, and other stakeholders may, at times, wish to raise concerns or complaints. Complaints are viewed positively and used to inform service improvements and no complainant will be disadvantaged because of making a complaint. All complaints are taken seriously, handled with care, and properly investigated with complainants being kept informed throughout the process.

This policy does not replace safeguarding procedures. Any concern that meets the threshold for a safeguarding or welfare concern will be referred through appropriate child protection procedures.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND TIMESCALES

Stage 1 – Informal complaint

- Initial concerns can be raised informally by phone, email, or in person (by appointment).
- You should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with your child's class teacher or trusted adult. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. We always want to know if there is a problem, so that we can act before the problem seriously affects the pupil's welfare and/or progress.
- The relevant adult will investigate and respond quickly and within five working days.

Stage 2 – Formal complaint to the Head of School

- If unresolved, a written complaint should be sent to the Head of School. It may be useful to complete the complaints form (at the end of this document).
- The Head of School will investigate and respond in writing within five working days.
- If the complaint concerns the Head of School, it should be addressed to the Executive Head. If the complaint concerns the Executive Head, it should be addressed to the Chair of the Proprietor Body using the contact details on the school's website.

Stage 3 – Escalation to the Proprietor Body

- If still unresolved, the complaint may be escalated to the Chair of the Proprietor Body who will organise a complaint panel hearing.
- The panel will consist of three individuals not directly involved in the complaint, including one independent member.
- The complainant is welcome to be accompanied by a family member or friend to the meeting. The school will always give the complainant at least five days' notice of the meeting.
- The panel hearing will be arranged within 15 working days.

Panel Hearing Outcome

- The panel will consider the complaint and the outcome of previous investigations.
- A written response with findings and recommendations will be sent to the complainant, Chair, and, where applicable, the subject of the complaint within five working days.
- The complaints panel will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction. Their overall decision, findings and recommendations will be final.

Records & Confidentiality

- All complaints and outcomes will be logged on the school's relevant complaints log.
- The detail of the complaint is recorded, as is the stage of resolution.
- Complaint records will remain confidential unless requested by the Secretary of State or a relevant inspection body.
- This information is accessible only to proprietors, leaders and inspectors. All records (including those relating to formal complaints) concerning safeguarding concerns and/or allegations of abuse are preserved in line with the 'retention of records' guidance in our data protection policy.

UNREASONABLE, SERIAL AND/OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

We are committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially and will not ordinarily limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect any of our colleagues to tolerate unreasonable behaviour and will take action to protect them from such behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive and/or threatening. Such unreasonable or persistent contact may not necessarily be directly associated with, or resulting from, formal complaints.

We define 'unreasonable' behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school, such as (these examples are not exhaustive), if the complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about colleagues who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds

- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and/or complicated contact with colleagues regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email (e.g. the sending of multiple emails, including from different email addresses and outside of school hours) and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.
- complainants should try to limit their communication while the complaint is being progressed. It is unhelpful if repeated correspondence is sent, as it could delay the outcome being reached
- whenever possible, the relevant Headteacher will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking. If the behaviour then continues, the relevant leader will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it.
- for complainants making excessive contact, and therefore causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan
- in response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from visiting and/or contacting our school.

COMPLAINTS FORM

Please email this completed form to: information@abschools.uk

When we receive a complaint, we aim to acknowledge its receipt on the same working day.

Your full name and relationship to the pupil:
The pupil's full name and date of birth:
Your address including postcode:
Your email address:
Your mobile number:
Please give details of your complaint:
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.
Signature:
Date:

Official use only

Date acknowledgement sent:
By whom:
Complaint referred to:
Date: