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The BRIT School

Complaints Policy

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The BRIT School

Complaints Policy

Introduction

The BRIT School is committed to providing a professional and creative working environment for the students and staff and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our community. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve is by listening and responding to the views of our community, by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible.
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, which calls for an immediate response.
- We deal with it promptly, politely, and, when appropriate, confidentially.
- We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- Resolve informal concerns quickly.
- Keep matters low-key.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children who are registered at The BRIT School. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to The BRIT School about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

The difference between a concern and a complaint:

A concern may be defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’.

A complaint may be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action’.

It is in everyone’s interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the

complaints procedure. The BRIT School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, The BRIT School will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, The BRIT School will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, The BRIT School will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing, via email, or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, if they have the appropriate consent to do so.

Complaints against school staff (except the Principal) should be made in the first instance to our complaint's coordinator (PA to the Principal) via email complaints@brit.croydon.sch.uk. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Principal should be addressed to Josh Berger (the Chair of Trustees), via chairoftrustees@brit.croydon.sch.uk Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Trustees, any individual Trustee or the whole Trustee Board should be addressed to Victoria Faint (the Clerk to the Trustee Board) via Victoria.Faint@croydon.gov.uk. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask a third-party organisation, for example, the Citizens Advice Bureau to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

Complainants should not approach individual Trustees to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 3 of the procedure.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Complaints Coordinator will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope of the Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by The BRIT School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
Admissions to schools	Concerns about admissions are handled via a separate process. Please see our Admission policy for further details.
Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance. If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The LADO can be contacted via email on: lado@croydon.gov.uk or by phone on 0208 255 2889.
Exclusion of children from school*	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/schooldiscipline-exclusions/exclusions. *complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.
Whistleblowing	We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistle-blowers in education

	who do not want to raise matters directly with their employer. Referrals can be made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus. Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain directly to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.
Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. 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.
Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them directly.

Data Subject Complaints

Individuals have the right to make a complaint directly to us if they believe their data protection rights have been breached.

We will acknowledge receipt within 30 days and provide a substantive response without undue delay. If you are not satisfied with our response, you may escalate the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Further information about how the School handles data protection complaints can be found at Appendix 2 of this policy, along with a data protection complaints form at Appendix 3. Complaints can be made in writing to The Data Protection Coordinator dpo-brit@brit.croydon.sch.uk.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against The BRIT School in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Resolving complaints

The BRIT School would like to resolve the complaint at the earliest stage in the procedure. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- An undertaking to review school policies considering the complaint
- An apology.

Managing serial and unreasonable complaints

The BRIT School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The BRIT School defines 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, 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 cooperate with the complaint's investigation process
- Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaint procedure
- Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaint procedure or with good practice
- Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be considered 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 staff 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 including referral to the Department for Education
- Seeks an unrealistic outcome
- Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email 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 with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Complaints Coordinator, Principal or Chair of Trustees will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues, the Principal will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact The BRIT School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from The BRIT School.

Withdrawal of a complaint

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

Stage 1 - Informal process – Raising a concern

It is to be hoped that most concerns can be expressed and resolved on an informal basis. Concerns should be raised with your child's tutor or another appropriate member of staff such as tutors, the Head of Year/Pastoral team or the Directors/Heads of Departments in each strand/subject. Our members of staff can be contacted directly via email (which can be found on our website) or by calling the main reception and asking for the relevant member of staff to contact you. Your call or email will be acknowledged within 2 working days.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the appropriate person investigating the concern will provide an informal written response within 5 school days of the date of receipt of the concern.

If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaints

Formal complaints must be made to the Complaints Coordinator (unless they are about the Principal), via complaints@brit.croydon.sch.uk. This may also be done in person or in writing (preferably using the Complaint Form on page 13 of this policy).

The Complaint Coordinator will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days.

Within this response, the complaint coordinator will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint. The complaint coordinator will work with the Principal to designate the complaint to the appropriate member of staff to lead on the complaint and any required investigation. The timescale for a response will be given.

During the investigation, the designated member of staff:

• May meet with the complainant to clarify the complaint and the outcome the complainant would like to see.

• May interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish

• Will keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the designated member of staff leading on the complaint will provide a formal written response within 15 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If this deadline is not able to be met, the complainant will be provided with an update and a -revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide an explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions The BRIT School will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should the outcome of Stage 2 remain unresolved.

If the complaint is about the Principal, or a member of the board of trustees (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled Trustee will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 2.

Complaints that involve or are about the Principal should be addressed to Josh Berger (the Chair of Trustees), via chairoftrustees@brit.croydon.sch.uk Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Trustees, any individual Trustee or the whole Trustee Board should be addressed to Victoria Faint (the Clerk to the Trustee Board) via Victoria.Faint@croydon.gov.uk. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Stage 3 Panel Hearing

If the complaint remains unresolved following the outcome at Stage 2 and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint. At Stage 3 a panel hearing takes place. The panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, with one panel member who is independent of the management and running of the school. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made to the Clerk, via Victoria.Faint@croydon.gov.uk, within 5 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 response.

The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 5 school days and request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee.

Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 15 school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence based on written submissions from both parties.

If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the Chair or
- The entire governing body or
- The majority of the governing body

A complainant may bring someone along to the panel meeting to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate.

For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

7 school days before the meeting, the Clerk will aim to:

- Confirm and notify the complainant and the school of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant and school is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible.
- Circulate to all parties the submitted evidence pack from the parent and the school.

The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place.

Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint

- Where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and The BRIT School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 5 school days.

The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by The BRIT School.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions The BRIT School will take to resolve the complaint.

The panel will ensure that those findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. Furthermore, they will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Principal.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, along with what actions have been taken, regardless of the decision.

All 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 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Next Steps

If the complainant believes The BRIT School did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the DfE after they have completed Stage 3.

The DfE will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by The BRIT School. They will consider whether The BRIT School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint and whether they have followed Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the DfE online at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus by telephone on 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit

Department for Education

Cheylesmore House

5 Quinton Road

Coventry

CV1 2WT

The BRIT School Commitment

The BRIT School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

Our policy applies to all staff, Trustees and volunteers working in the school and takes into account statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and local guidance issued by the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (formally known as Croydon Safeguarding Children Board).

We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of this school safeguarding and child protection policy.

- End -

Please complete and return to the Complaint Coordinator who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Complaint Form

Your name:
Student's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to student (if relevant):
Address: **Post code:**
Daytime telephone number: **Evening telephone number:**
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.
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
Date Acknowledgement sent:
By Who:
Complaint referred to:
Date:

Appendix 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- Explain the complaint in full as early as possible
- Cooperate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint
- Respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint
- Ask for assistance as needed
- Treat all those involved in the complaint with respect
- Refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- Providing a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration of the complaint through:

  o Sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved

  o Interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint

  o Consideration of records and other relevant information o analysing information

- Liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- Conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting
- Ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal
- Be mindful of the timescales to respond
- Prepare a comprehensive report for the Principal or complaints panel that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.
- The Principal or complaints panel will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator

The complaints co-ordinator should:

- Ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure
- Liaise with staff members, Principal, Chair of Trustees or the Clerk, as appropriate, and to ensure the smooth running of the complaint's procedure
- Be aware of issues regarding:

  o sharing third party information

  o additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person

- Keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the panel and should:

- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and 13 duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Set the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- Collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example: stage 1 paperwork, school and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale
- Record the proceedings
- Circulate the minutes of the meeting
- Notify all parties of the panel's decision.

Panel Chair

The panel's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- Both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting
- The meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy

- Complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person
- The remit of the committee is explained to the complainant
- Written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR.
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting
- Both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself
- The issues are addressed
- Key findings of fact are made
- The panel is open-minded and acts independently
- No member of the panel has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure
- The meeting is minuted
- They liaise with the Clerk.

Panel Member

Panel members should be aware that:

- The meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so. No Trustee may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.
- The aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- Many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.
- Extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.

The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

Appendix 2 - Data Protection Complaints

Under Data Protection Law, individuals have the right to raise concerns or make complaints about the way their personal data has been handled. This includes concerns about how the School collects, stores, uses, shares, or secures personal data, as well as how the School has responded to a previous data protection related request (for example, a Subject Access Request).

The purpose of this right is to ensure that individuals can easily challenge potential non-compliance, seek clarification or correction, and help the School to continually improve its data protection practices.

This appendix provides guidance for staff on how to handle data protection complaints and for individuals on how to submit one.

Failure to address data protection complaints appropriately can expose the School to enforcement action by the ICO and reputational risk. The School therefore treats all complaints seriously and in accordance with this policy.

What is a Data Protection Complaint?

A data protection complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction from an individual (or their authorised representative) about how the School has processed their personal data or handles a data protection request.

Examples include complaints about:

- Inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information being held;
- Personal data being used or shared without lawful basis;
- A delay or failure to respond to a Subject Access Request or other data rights request;
- Inappropriate disclosure or loss of personal data;
- Lack of transparency in how data is collected or used;
- Concerns about automated decision-making or profiling; or,
- Any other alleged breach of the UK GDPR or Data Protection Act 2018.

A complaint does not need to reference "data protection" or "UK GDPR" to be valid; any statement indicating concern about how personal data has been handled must be treated as such.

How to Make a Data Protection Complaint

Individuals can make a complaint verbally or in writing (including by email, letter, or online form). To help ensure a full and efficient investigation, complainants are encouraged to use the Data Protection Complaint Form provided below in Appendix 3, providing:

- Their name and contact details;
- A clear description of the concern;
- Any relevant dates, correspondence, or evidence; and,
- The outcome they seek.

Complaints should be directed to the Data Protection Coordinator.

Acknowledging and Investigating a Complaint:

The School will acknowledge the complaint within 30 days of receipt. The acknowledgment will confirm that the complaint has been received, outline the next steps, and provide contact details for any questions.

Where clarification or additional evidence is required to investigate the complaint properly, the response timeframe may be paused until sufficient information has been provided. All complaints will be handled confidentially and investigated promptly, fairly, and proportionately.

The School will aim to provide a substantive response as soon as reasonably practicable. The investigation may involve consultation with relevant departments, review of systems or records, and advice from the School DPO.

Outcome of a Complaint

Following investigation, the School will provide a written response setting out:

- The findings of the investigation;
- Any corrective or preventative action the School will take (if appropriate); and,
- The right to escalate the matter to the ICO if the complainant remains dissatisfied.

Complaints Received During School Closure Periods

The School will endeavour to acknowledge and investigate complaints as soon as reasonably practicable. However, during school closure periods, offices and systems may not be routinely monitored, which could delay acknowledgment and investigation. Where a complaint is received during such a period, the School will:

- Record the date of receipt;

- Acknowledgment the complaint as soon as possible; and,
- Provide an update to the complainant once the School reopens.

Complainants who require an urgent response are encouraged to submit their complaint during term time wherever possible.

Record Keeping

The School will maintain a record of all data protection complaints, including:

- The date the complaint was received;
- The complainant's name;
- The nature of the complaint;
- Any key investigative steps taken;
- The outcome and date of response; and,
- Any follow-up actions taken.

Records will be retained in accordance with the School's Records Retention Schedule.

Appendix 4 – Data Protection Complaints Form

The UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 give you the right to raise a concern or make a complaint about the way the School processes your personal data, handles your request, or otherwise complies with data protection law.

Please complete this form if you wish to raise a complaint and send it to the Data Protection Coordinator. The School will acknowledge your complaint within 30 calendar days of receipt and will aim to provide you with a full response as soon as reasonably practicable.

Proof of Identity

If your complaint relates to the processing of personal data and we need to verify your identity, we may ask for proof of identity before investigating. Acceptable documents include a copy of your passport, driving licence.

Section 1 – Complainant Details

Title	
Surname/Family Name	
First Name(s)/ Forename	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Post Code	
Phone Number	
Email address	

Section 2 – Details of Complaint

Please describe your concern in as much detail as possible. Include dates, names, and copies of any relevant correspondence or documents if available.

Have you previously raised this concern with the School?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the date and to whom it was reported:

What outcome are you seeking?

Section 3 – Representative (if applicable)

If you are making this complaint on behalf of someone else, please complete the section below.

You must provide proof of your identity and evidence of your authority to act on behalf of the data subject.

Title	
Surname/Family Name	
First Name(s)/ Forename	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Post Code	
Phone Number	
Email address	
Relationship to Data Subject	

Proof of Authorisation (enclose one):

☐ Letter of authority ☐ Power of Attorney ☐ Parental responsibility ☐ Other (details): _____

Section 4 – Acknowledgement and Declaration

☐ I confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
☐ I understand that the School may need to contact me to clarify details and may need to verify my identity before investigating.

Signature: _____ Date: _____