

BRYN TIRION HALL SCHOOL



School Complaints Policy

Reviewed December 2016

Reviewed October 2017

Revised October 2018

Reviewed October 2019

Reviewed January 2021



School Complaints Policy

Introduction

At Bryn Tirion Hall School many of the pupils, have experienced significant difficulties within educational environments and as such have little trust in adults and will often turn to “omnipotent” patterns of behaviour. It is vital that complaints are treated with respect, sympathy and confidentiality in order to create an environment where pupils understand and believe that trusting relationships can develop and that their complaints will be responded to with complete clarity.

Aim of the Policy

Bryn Tirion Hall School takes all complaints seriously and seeks to use the outcome of any complaints to further strengthen and develop the service we offer. Criticism of staff or the service the pupils receive should be accepted in a professional manner and not taken personally. The aim of this policy is to give clear guidance on the process by which complaints within the school are dealt with in accordance with *The Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003*.

Handling complaints

Complaints are investigated with urgency for the benefit of the originator but not at the expense or compassion for the colleague being criticised or for the issue being raised. Staff are expected to respond to complaints generally in consultation with the following Senior Leadership Team members: Paddy Prendergast, Caleb Dixon or Annette Cunningham.

- complaints about general school issues including the curriculum (syllabus, progress, homework, setting etc.) are normally referred to a member of the SLT
- complaints about staff are referred to the SLT and will be referenced to the staff handbook
- complaints about senior staff are normally referred to the Principal
- complaints about the Principal or Vice Principal should be referenced to a member of the Quality Assurance Committee via the QEWC company secretary Annette Cunningham 01978 760034

Monitoring and Evaluation

- records of complaints are maintained by the Business Manager Annette Cunningham annette.cunningham@qewc.co.uk in the school Management Information System (MIS)
- if the complaint is about the Principal or Vice Principal, the designated member of the Quality Assurance Committee will hold all records.

Complaints Procedures

Receiving the complaint. The persons receiving the complaint will:

- listen sympathetically to the originator
- refer the complainant to a member of the SLT whilst ensuring that all relevant information is passed on to the person investigating

Dealing with the complaint. The person from SLT investigating the complaint will:

- offer an acknowledgement within three working days

- indicate what action will be taken, by whom and by when
- ensure that a thorough and fair investigation is carried out
- consult appropriately
- maintain confidentiality
- involve other agencies, e.g. the Police, Social Services etc., as appropriate
- keep the complainant informed of the progress of the investigation
- treat complaints confidentially except where this would put a pupil at risk, then the pupil's safety must be our first concern. *Any complaint which alleges any kind of abuse will be dealt with in line with the School Safeguarding Policy which is available on request*
- ensure that staff concerned are; given the opportunity to put their side of the case, kept informed of progress in the investigation and are informed of the outcome

Deciding what action to take. If the person investigating the complaint finds that there is a case to answer, the following methods of redress may be offered:

- mediation and reconciliation if appropriate
- remedial actions to resolve general school related complaints
- risk assessment of any likely problems and establish suitable protective actions

The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation as soon as is reasonably possible. She/he will also be informed to whom reference can be made if the outcome is not thought to be satisfactory as per the procedures described below

Keeping Records

The person investigating will ensure that:

- the complaint is recorded (with associated papers)
- confidentiality is maintained

Reviewing and Monitoring

The person investigating will:

- review complaints
- survey complainants to determine the levels of satisfaction achieved
- produce a report if appropriate

A complaint not being solved satisfactorily

- if there is a need for an alternative view of any complaint then a Director from the Quality Assurance Committee will determine whether to engage the services of an impartial but appropriately qualified and or experienced person to give their considered view
- if parents or carers are not satisfied with the outcome, provision will then be made for a hearing before a panel appointed on behalf of the Directors. Such a panel will consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. In

accordance with *The Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003* the panel will include one person who is independent of the management and running of the school. Parents or carers can attend and be accompanied to the hearing if they wish. Copies in writing of all findings and recommendations made by the panel will be provided to the complainant, Directors and Principal

- If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, then the complaint can be forwarded to the relevant national regulatory body or authority (e.g. Estyn, Social Services, Police, etc.)

Linked documents:

<p>The Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 All Wales Child Protection Procedures Keeping Learners Safe 158/2015 Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff 176/2015 Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff 009/2014 Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 097/2013 Complaints procedures for school governing bodies in Wales 011/2012 School Safeguarding Policy School Behaviour Policy School Anti Bullying Policy Employee Handbook</p>

Complaints Procedure

Step 1

Tell a member of staff immediately.
Often simple mistakes or misunderstandings can be resolved straight away.

Step 2

Once aware, a member of the school Senior Leadership Team will acknowledge your complaint within 3 days.
They will determine what action will be taken, by whom and by when.

Step 3

If you are not happy with the outcome of SLT investigation you can contact the Designated Safeguarding Director Natalie Fletcher, explaining why you aren't happy on 01978 760034 or natalie.fletcher@gewc.co.uk
We aim to carry out a full review of your complaint within 15 working days. If the complaint is complicated and other agencies are involved it may take longer but we will keep you informed.

Step 4

If parents or carers are not satisfied with the outcome, they can request that Natalie Fletcher extend the investigation through provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by the Directors of 3 people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

Step 5

If you feel after taking all the above steps that something else should happen, you could contact the relevant national regulatory body or authority (e.g. Estyn, Social Services, police, etc.).
Estyn: enquiries@estyn.gov.uk or 029 2044 6446
North Wales Police: 101 or 0300 330 0101
Flintshire Social Services: SSDUTY@flintshire.gov.uk or 01352 701000

Step 6

Records will be kept of all complaints indicating how they were resolved and at which stage of the proceedings, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.
All correspondence, statements and records are kept confidential.

School Complaints Recording Form

Appendix 2

Bryn Tirion Hall School

Complaints form

Personal Details

Name

Address

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Postcode

Daytime telephone number

Evening telephone number

If applicable, name of pupil or pupils

Your relationship to the school, e.g. parent, carer, neighbour, member of the public, student:

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Please give details of your complaint:

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What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?

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Who did you speak to, when and what was the response?

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

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Signature

Date

Official Use:

Date of acknowledgment

By whom

Complaint referred to

Date