



The Bayleaf Hub

Complaints Policy

2025 – 2026



**THE BAYLEAF HUB
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Reviewed by:	Kelly Pope
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Date of next review:	September 2026



Curiosity – Courage - Community

We believe in providing trauma-informed, therapeutic care. Where children and young people feel safe, valued and understood. We nurture Trust, emotional growth and resilience compassionate, consistent and relationship-led support.

C = *Curiosity and a bias for action fuel our innovation.*

A = *Accountability to those we serve help us deliver results.*

R = *Respect and Integrity are demonstrated in our actions.*

E = *Engaged and passionate employees define our company.*

Legal Status:

This complaints procedure, as required by law in paragraph 33 [Part 7 of the Independent School Standards) and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be made available on the school's website.

Purpose and Aims:

- To ensure that complaints are handled fairly and confidentially.
- To provide a structured process for addressing concerns from parents, pupils or the public.
- To provide a structure whereby complaints can be resolved informally wherever possible, ensuring that all parties involved are treated with respect and consideration.
- To outline the steps to be taken if a complaint cannot be resolved informally by providing a formal procedure for complaints to be made in writing.
- To support positive relationships between schools, families and communities.

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 generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally (Stage 1), without the need to invoke formal procedures (Stages 2 & 3). We take all concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve any matter raised, as quickly as possible.

Who can make a complaint

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services provided, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as suspensions or admissions). The Complaints Policy does not apply to prospective pupils who have no right of complaint.



Complaints from parents and carers

The procedures set out below only relate to complaints from parents/carers of pupils, i.e. persons for whom education is being provided at the school. The process set out below does not cover complaints from parents of pupils who have left (except in cases where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at the school).

1. Informal Complaint (Stage 1)

If parents or carers have a complaint, they may initially wish to contact the school informally either by telephone, in writing or personally after making an appointment. The school will ask the complainant what they think might resolve the issue. The school will consider and resolve as quickly, and efficiently as possible the complaint and will respond with the outcome within 10 days, (where further investigations are necessary that will exceed this time period, new time limits will be communicated with an explanation for the delay). Complaints received out of term-time will be considered to be received on the next school day. For example, a complaint made during the school summer holidays will be considered to be received on the first day of the autumn term. If a complainant has difficulty making a complaint in writing, the school will take reasonable steps to support the complainant in making their complaint. The school will accept complaints made by third parties on behalf of parents. The school may, however, ask for evidence that the third party has consent to act on behalf of the parent (and to be privy to any information discussed during the complaints procedure and any personal data that may be disclosed in the response).

2. Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

If parents or carers are not satisfied with the response at Stage 1, they should write formally to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will investigate the complaint further and respond in writing within 10 days (where further investigations are necessary that will exceed this time period, new time limits will be communicated with an explanation for the delay). If the complaint is against the Headteacher, the complaint should be addressed to the Executive Headteacher. The Executive Headteacher will investigate and respond within 20 days. Complaints received out of term-time will be considered to be received on the next school day. For example, a complaint made during the school summer holidays will be considered to be received on the first day of the autumn term. If a complainant has difficulty making a complaint in writing, the school will take reasonable steps to support the complainant in making their complaint. The school will accept complaints made by third parties on behalf of parents. The school may, however, ask for evidence that the third party has consent to act on behalf of the parent (and to be privy to any information discussed during the complaints procedure and any personal data that may be disclosed in the response).

3. Formal Complaint (Stage 3)

If the parents or carers are still not satisfied with the response at Stage 2, they should inform the Director of Education, Wayne Cooper, who will arrange a panel to hear the complaint. We will not normally accept a request for escalation to stage 3 if it is made more than one month after the stage 2 response is sent unless there is a genuine reason, for example, the complainant was unwell. The panel will comprise three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The date of the panel meeting will take into account the availability of the parents or carers as well as the school and will take place within 30 days. Complaints received out of term-time will be considered to be received on the next school day. For example, a complaint made during the school summer holidays will be considered to be received on the first day of the autumn term. If a complainant has difficulty making a complaint in writing, the school will take reasonable steps to support the complainant in making



their complaint. Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish (The panel hearing does not confer a right on a parent to have a legal representative to make representations on their behalf at the hearing).

The panel will hear the complaint and will hear the outcome of the school's investigations and its response to these. The panel will then make findings and recommendations which will be communicated in writing within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing to the Proprietor, Education Director, the Executive Headteacher and the Headteacher and the parent or carer. If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, the panel will meet in line with this policy. The school's arrangements for the panel hearing will be reasonable in order to facilitate the parent(s) exercising the right of attendance.

A written record of all complaints and their resolution, whether they proceeded to a panel hearing or not, will be kept on the school premises by the Headteacher (Equality Act 2010) and made available to the Proprietor and Ofsted inspectors on request. The school will record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. These records and any correspondence relating to a complaint will remain confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the Education Act 2002 requests access to the records. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be published on the school website.

Complaints from pupils

The procedures below will be followed in the event of a pupil making a complaint against a member of staff, a fellow pupil or any other person or situation either in school or outside. Pupils may wish to talk to an adult they trust about a situation relating to school or to a situation outside school. Pupils are reminded that, although they may speak to any member of staff, there may be occasions where information will have to be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and potentially other agencies, such as the Local Authority Children's Services.

Within school, pupils may talk to any member of Education Staff. A pupil may merely need a trusted adult to talk a situation through with and may not be making a formal complaint. However, all actual complaints made by pupils will be recorded by the member of staff in the Complaints Log. The school response to the complaint will also be recorded. If the complaint is serious the pupil's parents/carers will be informed of both the complaint and the outcome. Some complaints will be referred to other agencies or to the Local Authority. If necessary, a meeting will be called to discuss the issues further. A pupil may ask to speak to an adult from an outside agency. The school will, wherever possible, put the pupil in contact with a representative of the appropriate agency. The referral will be noted in the pupil's file. If the complaint is an allegation against a member of staff then the school's safeguarding policy must be followed in addition to recording the complaint.

Anonymous concerns and complaints

This policy and procedure only apply in respect of concerns and complaints raised by parents/carers and key stakeholders. We will not, therefore, respond to concerns or complaints raised anonymously unless these are of a safeguarding nature. We will not, therefore, respond to concerns or complaints raised anonymously unless these are of a safeguarding nature. We will, however, consider the issues raised and take action where appropriate.



Community complaints

Any known community member making a complaint will receive communication from the school to ascertain the severity of the complaint. We will then assess the nature of the complaint and determine whether any further action needs to be taken.

Repeated complaints

If we have responded to a complaint and we receive a duplicate complaint from someone else, we will assess it to determine whether there are aspects that we had not previously considered. If we are satisfied that there are no new aspects (and we are assured that the complaints process has been followed fully through to a conclusion at Stage 3) we will inform the complainant and direct them to the Local Authority or the Department for education if they are dissatisfied with our response to the original complaint. If there are new aspects, we will follow this policy and procedure again.

Unreasonable complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, if a complainant displays unreasonable or unreasonably persistent behaviour, we may need to take action to limit contact in the interests of maintaining the effectiveness of this policy and procedure and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues. Examples of unreasonable and unreasonably persistent behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- being abusive or making threats of any kind;
- being physically or verbally intimidating or offensive;
- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- 'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'.