



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Statement of Policy

This policy applies to all concerns and complaints other than

- **Child Protection** issues and
- **Exclusions** where separate procedures apply

This policy complies with Schedule 1, Part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010.

Timescales

We aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner. Timescales for each stage of the Complaints Procedure are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. For the purposes of this policy, a "working day" is defined as a weekday during term time, when Lammas School is open. The definition of "working day" excludes weekends and Bank Holidays.

Policy Aim and Statement

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a concern or complaint by a parent/carer is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level and resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is good practice, it is fair to those concerned and it helps to promote parent/carers' and students' confidence in our ability to safeguard and promote welfare. We will try to resolve every concern or complaint in a positive way with the aim of resolving the issue in a transparent manner.

The Lammas School expects that most concerns can be resolved informally and guarantees to treat seriously and confidentially all concerns whether raised informally or formally.

Statement

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. We recognise that a difficulty that is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and also to the Learning Hub's efficient running. We intend that parents/carers and students should never feel – or be made to feel – that a complaint will be taken amiss or will adversely affect a student or his/her opportunities at Lammas School. The policy, however, distinguishes between a concern or difficulty which can be resolved informally and a formal complaint which will require further investigation.

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

1. Concerns

Most concerns, where a parent/carer seeks intervention, reconsideration or some other action to be taken, can be resolved informally. Examples might include dissatisfaction about some aspect of teaching, disciplinary matters or issues outside the classroom.

Parents/carers should raise the concern initially with the Head Teacher. Lammas School will ensure that informal complaints are resolved within 10 working days of being raised.

2. Unresolved concerns

A concern which has not been resolved by informal means within ten working days from the receipt of the complaint can be notified as a formal complaint in accordance with Stage 2 below.

3. Record of concerns

In the case of concerns raised under Stage 1 of this procedure, the only record of the concern and its resolution will be file notes by the Head Teacher and/or file correspondence between the person raising the concern and the respondent.

Stage 2: Formal Complaints

4. Notification

An unresolved concern under Stage 1, or a complaint which needs investigation, or a more serious dissatisfaction with some aspect of Lammas School policies, procedures, management or administration should be set out in writing with full details and sent with all relevant documents and full contact details for the attention of the Head Teacher of Lammas School (complaints regarding the Head Teacher should go to the Nisai Group Chief Executive). Should a formal written complaint be received by another member of Lammas staff, this should be immediately passed to the Head Teacher.

5. Acknowledgement

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing normally within 3 working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays. The acknowledgement will indicate the action that is being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.

6. Investigation and resolution

The Head Teacher of Lammas School may deal with the matter personally or delegate a senior member of staff to act as “investigating officer.” The “investigating officer” may request additional information from the complainant and will fully investigate the issue. In most cases the Head Teacher or investigating officer will meet or speak with the parent/carer to discuss the matter.

7. Outcome

The aim is to inform any complainant of the outcome of an investigation and the resolution to the complaint within 15 working days from the receipt of the complaint. Please note that any complaint received during a School holiday or within 15 working days of the end of term or half term may take longer to resolve.

8. Record of complaints

A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made

- (i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- (ii) action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

9. Unresolved Complaints

Where the complainant is not satisfied with Lammas School's response to their complaint they may have their complaint considered by a Complaints Panel appointed by the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member will be external to and independent of Lammas School and the Nisai Group. Please note that as a parent/carer you have the right to be accompanied at a panel hearing if you should so wish.

Within five days the panel will be able to make findings and recommendations which will be made available both electronically and in hard copy to the complainant and, where relevant, to the person complained about. Any documents will be available for inspection at Lammas School and a copy held at Proprietor's office.

An annual report will be written outlining all the complaints received and will be considered during Lammas School and Nisai Groups annual cycle of Self Evaluation and Development Planning. We regret that we cannot take action on an anonymous complaint unless in exceptional circumstances. Complaints found to be of a false nature may result in legal action.

If your complaint relates to the Freedom of Information Act you should contact the Information Commissioner.

Number of complaints received for 2016-17: None

Information Commissioner's Office

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Cheshire, SK9 5AF
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk