



# Complaints Policy and Procedure

## DETAILS OF POLICY

Original policy created by:	Andy Coates
Date of most recent review:	January 2023
Reason for review:	Update
Adopted by:	SLT
Parties communicated to:	All stakeholders
Methods of Communication:	School intranet, induction, website
Next planned review date:	January 2024
Persons responsible for audit review of policy:	SLT

## **Introduction**

SwitchED2 prides itself on the quality of teaching and care provided to all its young people, however, if parents/carers do have a complaint regarding their child or against a member of staff (including the Headteacher), they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

## **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

The vast majority of complaints and concerns can be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents/carers have a complaint, they should normally contact their child's named tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents/carers' satisfaction. If the tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult the Headteacher.

Complaints made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant tutor unless the Head deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.

The tutor will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within one week or in the event that the tutor and the parent/carer fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents/carers will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headteacher will speak to the parents/carers concerned, normally within 7 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations.

The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents/carers will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents/carers are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

## **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents/carers seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to an independent panel for consideration.

The panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be totally independent of the running of the school. The panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 2 days prior to the hearing.

The parents/carers may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations which it shall complete within 14 days of the hearing.

The Panel will write to the parents/carers informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decisions of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing by email or post to the parents/carers, the Headteacher and where relevant, the person complained about.