



Complaints Procedures

A Parent's Guide to Sharing Your Concerns about Your Child's Education

The Gwenllian Education Centre prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be dealt with by the School in accordance with the following Procedure.

The Gwenllian Education Centre (GEC) makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of students and of prospective students on the school's website and in the school office during the school day. The Gwenllian Education Centre will ensure that parents of students or prospective students who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.

This guidance will help you understand how to resolve concerns you may have about your child's education. Concerns are usually dealt with informally and resolved through honest discussion between parents/carers and the School.

Complaints Procedure

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about the school or the education provided, please discuss the matter with the student's teacher at the earliest opportunity. The school considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved at this stage. We aim to work closely and in partnership with parents.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. However, parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you or your child raises in good faith.

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's teacher in the first instance. All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If, the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult the schools Head Teacher.

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

The teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received and will also notify the Head Teacher or, in his absence, the Second-in-charge that a complaint has been received. Should the matter not be resolved within **five working days** or in the event that the teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents 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 should put their complaint in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will normally discuss the complaint with appropriate colleagues and then decide, after considering the complaint in the light of that discussion and any other information he may have, the appropriate course of action to take.

The Head Teacher will normally meet the parents concerned, within **five working days** of receiving the complaint in accordance with Stage 2, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

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

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

Once the Head Teacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing, within **28 working days** of receiving the written complaint. The Head Teacher will also give reasons for his decision.

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

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Complaints' 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 independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the proprietors of Reflect Education Ltd, who will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within **14 working 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 two working days prior to the hearing.

The parents 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 they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within **seven working days** of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Following the resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information;

- Date when issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of student
- Description of the issue
- Record of the investigations
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue – including emails and records of telephone conversations.

Records of complaints received will be kept for a minimum of three years.