



Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedures

ID endeavors to provide the best education possible for all its pupils in an open and transparent environment. We welcome any feedback that we receive from parents, carers, pupils and others, and we accept that not all of this will be positive. Where concerns are raised, ID intends for these to be dealt with, fairly, openly, promptly and without prejudice.

In order to do so, this procedure explains what you should do if you have any concerns about ID. All members of staff will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to assist you.

Before making a formal complaint, parents, carers, pupils and others are urged to raise the concern with the Headteacher.

The majority of concerns can be dealt with without resorting to the procedure. Where you have a concern about any aspect of ID or the child's education or wellbeing, raise this with the Headteacher.

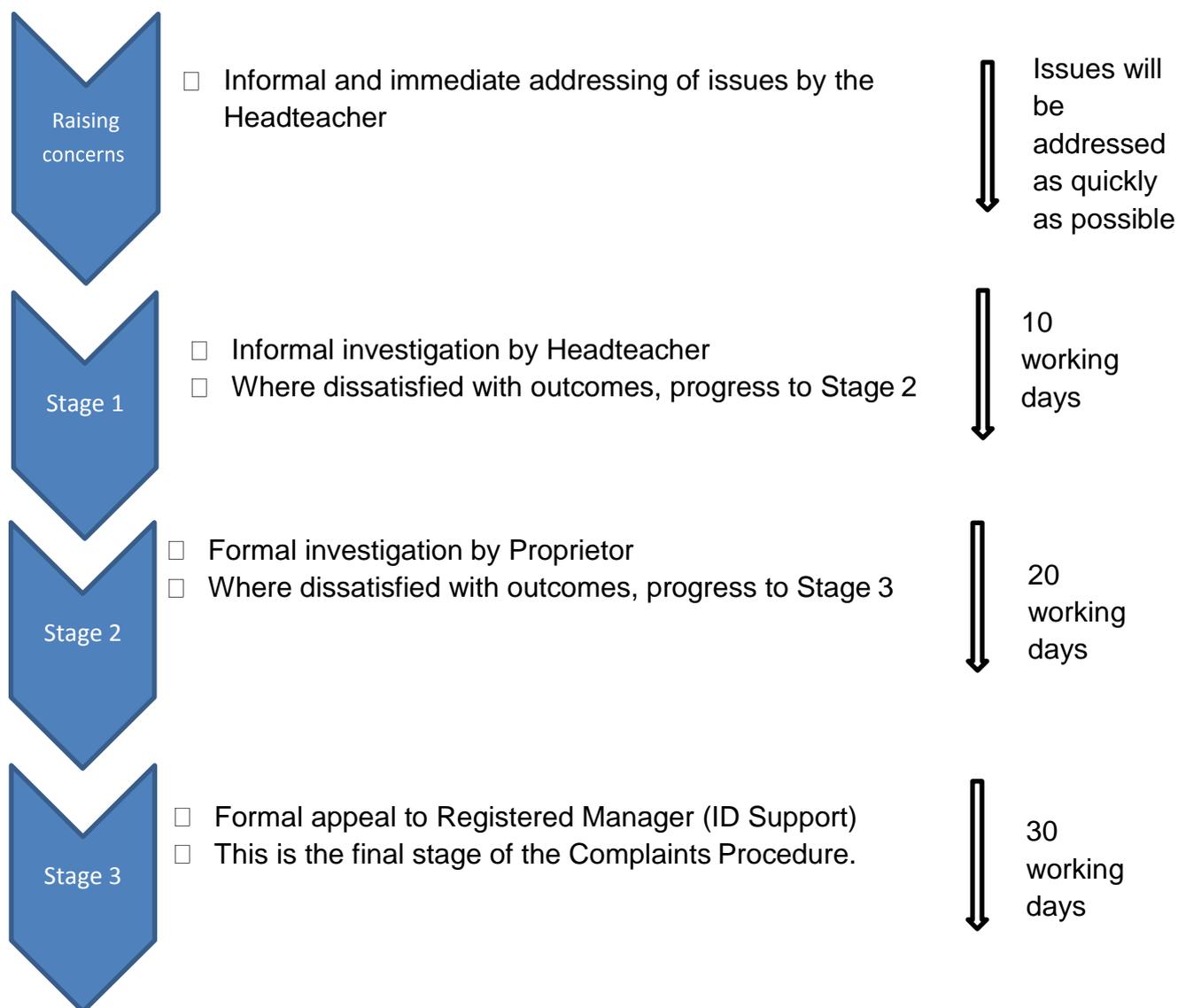
Contact can be made via the phone or in person. Ideally, the Headteacher will be able to address your concerns there and then, or they can arrange a meeting with you to discuss the issue.

All concerns will be dealt with confidentially, although the Headteacher may need to take notes if they feel the matter may need to be taken further or discussed with the Proprietor. Any notes will be kept in accordance with the principles of the GDPR 2018. However, notes would be able to be used as evidence if further investigation was required, or if the concern became a formal complaint.

ID will endeavour to abide by timeframes stated for each stage but acknowledges that in some circumstances, this is not always possible due to the complexity of information needed to review a complaint or difficulties regarding the individual's availability to deal with the complaint. For example, if it becomes apparent that it is not possible to complete any stage of the complaints procedure within a given timeframe, the individual responsible for handling the complaint will contact the complainant as soon as possible and come to an agreed timeframe that works for all parties involved.

Where a complaint regards the Headteacher, the complainant should first directly approach the Headteacher in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the complainant is not satisfied with this outcome they should notify the Proprietor, in writing of their concern or complaint.

If you need to raise an issue in the first instance, please do so with the Headteacher who will be happy to talk to you and seek to establish a solution. If you are not satisfied with this response and believe the issue has not been resolved, please use the following procedure as detailed below.





Stage 1

Stage One – Informal Investigation by Headteacher

Where as a result of raising an initial concern the complainant still feels that the issue has not been addressed, they may progress by making a Stage One complaint. In doing so, the following steps will be followed:

Complainant contacts the Headteacher regarding the complaint. The substance of the complaint is set out in writing, this enables the complaint to be logged and to ensure it is investigating the complaint under Stage One of the procedure.

The complainant must explain in writing (letter or e-mail)

- **An overview of the complaint so far**
- **Who has been involved**
- **Why the complaint remains unsolved**
- **Action they would like to be taken to put things right**

The Headteacher will provide a written confirmation of the outcome of their investigation within 10 working days. Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they are able to progress to Stage Two of the complaints process.

The Headteacher will make a record of the complaint and the outcomes of the discussion which will be held by ID for twelve months, in line with the principles of the GDPR, 2018.



Stage 2

Stage Two Formal Investigation by the Proprietor

The complainant should submit a written formal complaint to the Proprietor. The complainant should ensure that their letter or e-mail indicates that they believe that the complaint has reached Stage Two of the Complaints Procedure. The written formal complaint must set out

- **An overview of the complaint so far**
- **Who has been involved**
- **Why the complaint remains unsolved**
- **That the complainant is using Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure**
- **The action they would like to be taken to put things right**

The Formal Investigation will be conducted by the Proprietor. The complaint will be logged in accordance with ID procedures.

The Proprietor, will respond to the complainant. They will respond in writing within 10 working days of the date of receipt of the complaint to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and explain what action will be taken, giving clear timeframes.

A log of all correspondence in relation to the complaint will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Principles. The Proprietor will consider all relevant evidence; this may include but is not limited to:

- A statement from the complainant,
- Where relevant a statement from an individual who is the subject of the complaint
- Any previous correspondence regarding the complaint
- Any supporting documents in either case
- Interview with anyone related to the complaint.

The Proprietor, may decide to have a meeting with the complainant (and where relevant, the subject of the complaint) if they feel that it would be appropriate for the investigation.

After considering the available evidence, the Proprietor can:

- Uphold the complaint and direct that certain action be taken to resolve it
- Reject the complaint and provide the complainant with details of the Stage Three Complaints Procedure.

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- Uphold the complaint in part: in other words, the Proprietor may find one aspect of the complaint to be valid, but not another aspect. They may direct for certain further action to be taken to resolve the aspect that they find in favour of the complainant.

The Proprietor must inform the complainant of their decision in writing within 20 working days of having issued written acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint. They must explain clearly why they have come to the decision that they made. They must detail any agreed actions as a result of the complaint.

Finally, they must provide the complainant with details of how to progress the complaint to Stage Three if they are not satisfied, providing them with the contact details of the Registered Manager (ID Support).



Stage 3

Stage Three Appeal – review by Registered Manager (ID Support)

If the complainant wishes to appeal a decision at Stage Two of the procedure, or they are not satisfied with the action that the Proprietor took in relation to the complaint, the complainant is able to appeal this decision.

They must write to the Registered Manager (ID Support) as soon as possible after receiving notice of the Proprietor's decision, briefly outlining the content of the complaint, setting out the resolution they are seeking and requesting that a complaints appeal is undertaken.

The Registered Manager (ID Support) will fulfil the role of organising the time and date of the appeal hearing, inviting all the attendees, collating all the relevant documentation and distributing this 5 days in advance of the meeting, recording the proceedings in the form of minutes, and circulating these and the outcome of the meeting.

The complainant must request an Appeal Panel within 4 weeks of receiving the Proprietors Stage Two decision or it will not be considered, except in exceptional circumstances. On receipt of this written notification, the following steps will be followed;

The Registered manager (ID Support) will write to the complainant within five working days to confirm receipt of the appeal request and detail further action to be taken.

The Registered Manager (ID Support) will convene a panel of attendees. All panel members will have no prior knowledge of the content of the complaint.

The Appeal Hearing will take place within 30 working days of receipt of the date of the confirmation letter from the Registered Manager (ID Support) to the complainant, confirming the appeal.

In addition to the panel, the following parties will be invited, where applicable;

- The complainant
- The Proprietor who dealt with the complaint at Stage Two of the Complaints Procedure
- Where the complaint regards a member of staff, the staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

The complainant is also able to bring a companion with them to the hearing if they



wish. Where the subject of the complaint is a member of staff, that staff member is also able to bring a companion with them. The companion will be a friend or colleague. Neither party is able to bring legal representation with them.

The panel may make the following decisions:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to the academy's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of similar nature do not recur.

All parties who attended the meeting will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 5 working days

This is the final stage at which ID will consider the complaint. If the complainant remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the complaint further, please see the contact details at the end of this document. ID will not consider the complaint beyond this.

If the complainant feels that the ID acted “unreasonably” in the handling of the complaint, they can complain to the Department for Education after the complaints procedure has been exhausted. Please note that unreasonable is used in a legal sense and means acting in a way that no reasonable academy or authority would act in the same circumstances.

Department for Education <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/>

The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

GDPR, 2018 <https://www.eugdpr.org/>

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made>