



Policy Name: Complaints
Written by: Jennifer Parry

Review history date	Next Review Date	Coordinator	Head of Education
30th March 2023	30th March 2024	Jennifer Parry Gareth Brenton	Declan Tuer

Mission Statement

Preparing learners for the future by providing a sustainable outstanding educational experience where all learners realise pursue and achieve their full potential, enabling them to thrive as adults.

The school's approach:

Greenfields School promotes good behaviour by creating a happy, caring school environment where everyone feels valued, respected, secure and free from all forms of anti-social behaviour.

We believe that good behaviour is promoted when teaching and learning opportunities are stimulating, challenging and appropriately differentiate.

Purpose and Rationale:

Greenfields School is committed to dealing effectively with complaints. Where appropriate we will put right any mistakes we have made and we will apologise. We aim to learn from mistakes and use that experience to improve what we do. Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff that requires a response from the school.'

Complaints can be made by learners, guardians, members of staff, members of the local community or any community organisation, in short, by anyone who has dealings with the school.

This complaints procedure supports our commitment to the above and is a way of ensuring that anyone with an interest in the school can raise a concern, with confidence that it will be heard and addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion.

When to use the procedure

When you have a concern or make a complaint we will usually respond in the way we explain below. Sometimes you might be concerned about matters that are not decided by the school, in which case we will tell you to who to complain to. At other times, you may be concerned about matters that are handled through other procedures, in which case we will explain to you how your concern will be dealt with. If your concern or complaint is about another body as well as the school (for example the Local Placing Authority), we will work with them to decide how to handle your concern.

Have you asked us yet?

If you are approaching us for the first time regarding a concern, you should give us a chance to respond. If you are not happy with our response then you may make your complaint using the procedure we describe below. Most concerns can be settled quickly just by speaking to the relevant person in school, without the need to use a formal procedure.

What we expect from you

We believe that all complainants have a right to be heard, understood and respected. School staff have the same right. We expect you to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands or unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining.

Our approach to answering your concern or complaint

We will consider all your concerns and complaints in an open and fair way. At all times, the school will respect the rights and feelings of those involved and make every effort to protect confidential information. Timescales for dealing with your concerns or complaints may need to be extended following discussion with you. We may ask for advice from the local authority where appropriate. Some types of concern or complaint may raise issues that have to be dealt with in another way (other than through this complaints policy), in which case we will explain why this is so, and will tell you what steps will be taken. Greenfields (part of the CareTech/Cambian group) will keep the records of documents used to investigate your concern or complaint in school for seven years after it has been dealt with. This will include any reasons for "no action taken."

Complaints that are made anonymously, or that are considered to have been made only to cause harm or offence to individuals or the school, will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the school depending on the nature of the complaint.

School aims:

- To deal with any complaint against the school or any individual connected with it by following the correct procedures.
- To deal with all complaints thoroughly and by being open, honest and fair when dealing with the complainant.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Receiving Complaints

- Complaints may be made by anyone at the school. The procedure to be followed is outlined in the flowchart below.
- Staff must ensure that the complaints procedure is the correct course of action by considering whether the "complaint" would be better dealt with through, for example, anti-bullying or behaviour procedures. If unsure they will discuss the matter informally with their line manager or a senior member of the school's staff.
- Complaints may be received from other sources: parents / carers, placing authority, member of the public etc. In that case the person receiving the complaint should:
 - listen carefully to the complainant and make brief notes during the conversation.
 - check whether this is a formal complaint, in which case the person concerned should be asked to put the complaint in writing or, if preferred, come to the school to discuss it.
 - speak to the head teacher as soon as possible, unless the complaint concerns the head teacher, in which case contact should be made directly with Declan Tuer, Head of Education Services CareTech, without reference to the head teacher.
- Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- Stage 1, Stage 2 and if necessary Stage 3 procedures will then be followed.

Answering your concern or complaint

There are three Stages: 1, 2 and 3. Most complaints can be resolved at Stages 1 or 2. You can bring a relative or companion to support you at any time during the process but you will be expected to speak for yourself. However, we recognise that when the complainant is a student, it may be reasonable for the companion to speak on their behalf and/or to advise the pupil. As far as possible, your concern or complaint will be dealt with on a confidential basis. However, there may be occasions when the person dealing with your concern or complaint will need to consider whether anyone else within the school needs to know about it, so as to address it appropriately.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Timescale: 1 to 4 days

This assumes that the head teacher is not involved in the complaint

The head teacher will investigate the complaint and try to reach a satisfactory resolution.

If it is possible to reach a satisfactory resolution within 4 days, the head teacher will:

- a) record a summary of the complaint and the resolution in the complaints log.
- b) confirm in writing, to the complainant, the outcome of the investigation and the agreed resolution **and**,
- c) in the case of a young person attending the school, discuss the resolution with them to ensure that they understand and accept the outcome.

Stage 2: Formal Investigation

Timescale: up to 20 days from the initial complaint being received.

The complaint is referred to Decan Tuer, Head of Education Services CareTech, if:

- a) the head teacher is the subject of, or involved in, the complaint.
- b) at any time during the stage 1 process, it becomes apparent that an informal resolution will not be possible.
- c) the complaint is not resolved by the end of the fourteenth day after it is received.

The Head Of Education Services will:

- clarify the substance of the complaint, record it in writing and give a copy to the complainant.
- attempt to resolve the issue as quickly as possible, formally recording all interviews etc.
- request that the complainant agrees to further time to resolve the issue (beyond 35 days) if necessary.
- confirm in writing, to the complainant, the outcome of the investigation and the agreed resolution, including, if the complaint is found to be justified, what, if any, remedial action will be taken and offering an apology **and**,
- in the case of a young person attending the school, discuss the resolution with them to ensure that they understand and accept the outcome.
- ensure details of the complaint and the resolution are recorded in the school's complaints file and in the young person's file.
- copy the outcome of the complaint to the placing authority.

Stage 3 - Review Panel

Timescale: 30 days

1) If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 formal resolution, they may request a Stage 3 Panel Review.

2) The complainant must notify the Head of Education Service CareTech either verbally or in writing within 10 days of receiving the outcome of the Stage 2. Young people can be assisted by their preferred member of staff to start this process.

3) Formal notification of the start of Stage 3 will be returned to the complainant within 30 days of receipt of the request.

The Head of Education Services will ensure that:

- all relevant parties, including the complainant, are notified and briefed about the nature of the complaint and the Stage 3 resolution procedure.
- the complainant has access to an independent advocate or representative.
- a Review Panel, consisting of three people who are independent of the matter to be considered is established and that one person is asked to chair the meetings.
- arrange an appropriate venue and timetable for meetings.
- establish how the meetings will be organised and gather evidence and how the outcomes will be notified to CareTech Children's Services;
- arrange for the conclusions and recommendations of the Panel to be considered at an appropriate level by senior staff of CareTech.
- ensure that the complainant and their advocate/representative are informed both verbally and in writing of the outcome of the review.



Greenfields School How to Complain Information for Family, Visitors and Public

We strive to ensure that in your dealings with us, you will find our staff and services meet with both your expectations and your approval. If ever these standards fall below that which you find acceptable, or if there is anything else that you are unhappy about, we would ask that you tell us as soon as possible.

If you wish to complain about anything that you are unhappy about, you should:

1. **Step 1** - Tell a member of staff that you wish to complain or, write your complaint either on a Complaint Form (available in school via email request to Headteacher or Deputy Head or via telephone 01633259019.
2. **Step 2** - We will endeavour to try to resolve your complaint informally. Following this we will confirm in writing both receipt of your complaint and any outcome or further steps that will be taken to resolve your complaint within **4 working days** of receiving the complaint
3. **Step 3** -The Complaints Co-ordinator will inform you of how the complaint is to be handled and who will carry out investigations into your complaint.
4. **Step 4 & 5** - Your complaint will be investigated and the findings reported back to you within **20 working days** from receipt. If it is not possible to complete the report within 20 working days, you will be kept informed of the progress and the likely completion date.
5. **Step 6** - When your complaint has been investigated you will be invited to meet with the Manager and/or the investigating manager to discuss the findings of the complaint
6. **Step 7** - If we are still unable to resolve your complaint we will ask the Operations Director to nominate external (to this location) senior Cambian/Caretech staff to investigate and report back to you.
7. **Step 8 – 11** – You will receive the outcome from the external investigation process within **10 working days**. If we are still unable to resolve your complaint after this you may appeal this decision.
8. If there is not an agreed outcome to the complaint, you have the right for your complaint to be referred to third party arbitration.
9. **Step 12 – 14** – The appeal process involves a panel of three people who are not connected operationally with the service (one of whom is not connected or employed by Cambian/Caretech Group). You will be invited to attend the appeal process and may bring someone with you.
10. The decision of the appeal process is final.
11. You may also take your complaint to the local authority or placing authority (if you are a parent/carer/guardian) or you may take a complaint to our regulators:

Estyn

Tel: 029 2044 6446,
In Writing to:
Address
Anchor Court, Keen Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5JW

Social Care Ombudsman

Tel:
0300 061 0614
In writing to:
Social Care Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH

Note: in school or college settings we only undertake to follow the timeframes during school times and do not include school holidays.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Handbook/Prospectus
- the Staff Handbook
- School website
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent/carer-teacher consultations
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters
- reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Proprietor /Nominated Person
- information displays in the main school entrance

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

This policy will be monitored once a term and reviewed annually to ensure that:

- only appropriate issues are raised through the complaints procedure.
- record systems are used efficiently and effectively.
- only issues that have appropriately followed the Stage 1 procedures without resolution are referred to the Head of Education Services for investigation at Stage 2.
- timescales are abided by.
- where young people make a complaint they are offered appropriate support to:
 - make their complaint and follow the correct procedure and
 - understand and respond appropriately to the outcomes of the investigation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, strategies and documents:

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
Handling complaints
Behaviour and Discipline (including Rewards and Sanctions)
Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
Anti-bullying
SEND
Missing children
Whistle blowing
Safer recruitment
Staff grievance and disciplinary (including management of allegations)
And other relevant policies

This policy will be reviewed annually and or as required and evaluated through:

- discussion between the head teacher and Head of Education Services CareTech about effectiveness, in terms of satisfactory outcomes for both complainants and the school.
- external evaluation by Estyn.

In accordance with Standard 7, 33 (k), of The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2003, Greenfields School will maintain standards of confidentiality of records, unless so requested by those referred to in the Regulations.

Headteacher:	Jennifer Parry	Date:	30 th March 2023
Deputy Head:	Gareth Brenton	Date:	30 th March 2023
Head Of Education:	Declan Tuer	Date:	30 th March 2023