

A14: COMPLAINTS (also applies to International Study Centre & EYFS)

Complaints Policy –Chase Grammar School, CGISC and EYFS

Review Date December 2025

Document Quality Control

Version:	Author:	Date:	Reviewed by:	Date:
December 2024	M Simpson	06.12.2024	Richard Baum	Pending

Document Quality Control

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August 2023	Complaints updated for Year 22-23	M Simpson	30.08.2023	M Hartland	05.09.2023
February 2024	Executive director's signature added	M Simpson	31.01.2024	B Farrell	20.02.2024
September 2024	All complaints and concerns from May 2024 to be kept securely/confidentially for a minimum of 20 years	M Simpson	01.09.2024	Richard Baum	17.09.2024
December 2025	Barry Farrell removed – Richard Baum added	M Simpson	06.12.2024	Richard Baum	Pending

Introduction

We strive to provide a good education for all our students and the Principal and staff are committed to building positive relationships with all parents. However, we are obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints from parents or guardians of children who are currently attending our school. We recognise that matters that are unresolved risk becoming a cause of resentment, which can erode relationships and confidence in Chase Grammar School. Chase Grammar School will try to resolve every concern or complaint in a positive way, with the aim of putting right that which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing our systems and procedures in light of the circumstances. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and with appropriate levels of confidentiality.

If parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to their child's Academic Mentor immediately. Matters raised will be dealt with at the appropriate level and resolved as swiftly as possible, but without undue haste. Safeguarding and the promotion of pupil welfare will always be the priority in addressing any concerns or complaints. Complainants will never be made to feel that their concerns are trivial, that they will be taken amiss or that they will inappropriately affect any pupil at School.

This policy has regard to other School policies, some of which may take precedence in certain situations. Examples include, but are not limited to: Safeguarding Children Policy, Exclusion Policy, Parent Contract (including Terms & Conditions). This policy takes account of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 in force from 5th January 2015. The processes set out below may be adapted as appropriate to meet the policy aims and circumstances of each case. Certain procedures can only be carried out during term time.

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Aims and Objectives

Chase Grammar School aims to be open, honest and fair when dealing with any complaint. Concerns or complaints will be managed sympathetically, discretely, efficiently and with due dignity to all parties. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as quickly as possible. We aim to resolve any concerns and complaints through a mutual dialogue with parents, putting the child's best interests above all else. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved. This policy applies to the whole School including EYFS. This document is published to parents and prospective parents on the School's website and is made available upon request to parents and prospective parents.

Terms

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined as:

Students: refers to all children enrolled in school.

Staff: refers to all staff, teaching and support in school.

Parents: refers to all current parents or legal guardian or education guardian, and may, at our discretion, include a parent whose child has recently left the School.

Working Day: 9am-5.00pm during term time

Occasionally parents (parents of students currently at the School and, if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered at School) may wish to make a complaint, and this will be dealt with by the School in accordance with the following Complaints Procedure, which forms part of the School's systems for quality control. These procedures apply to all current registered pupils of Chase Grammar School. These procedures do not apply to parents of prospective pupils.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Principal or Chair of the Advisory Board, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Complaints outside of this policy

Some complaints fall outside the school's complaints procedure, for example:

- exclusions
- staff grievances

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- disciplinary procedures

Procedures for Managing Parental Complaints

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. The Academic Mentor is the first point of contact for any complaints that parents have. Academic Mentors should be able to deal with most matters, informing and seeking the help of other staff where appropriate. If the Academic Mentor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult a Head of Faculty, member of the SLT or other colleagues, but at Stage 1, it remains for the Academic Mentor to communicate with the parent and resolve the matter informally within five term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of the matter being raised.

Complaints made directly to the Principal or Senior Leadership Team will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff, unless it is deemed appropriate for them to deal with the matter personally. In this event, he/she will attempt to resolve the matter informally within five working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of the matter being raised or as soon as is practical.

Parents of boarding students may contact House Parents directly through published contact details.

In the event that the Academic Mentor or SLT member or Principal and parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution of Complaints

Parents should put their complaint **in writing** to the Vice Principal. The Vice Principal will agree a course of action with the Principal.

The relevant member of staff will contact the parents concerned, within three term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of their acknowledgement receiving a complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

However, it may be necessary for the further investigations to be carried out. In this case, the parents will be informed and these will normally be completed within seven term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) or as soon as is practical.

If the complaint is about the Principal, the complaint should be put **in writing** to Richard Baum, the designated member of our Advisory Board, by email, to directors@chasegrammar.com who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate action to take. Richard Baum will contact the parents concerned, within three term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of receiving a complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the formal complaint. The written records kept of all meetings, interviews and any correspondence are confidential and will be held on file by the Vice Principal.

Once the Vice Principal/Principal/designated member of the Advisory Board is satisfied that so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents informed of this decision in writing by email or conventional mail, with reasons being given for the decision, within a further seven term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm). If for any reason this is not

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possible, the Principal/Head of the Advisory Board will write to the parents within the total 17 working term-time period referred to above, stating the reason or reasons why they are unable to issue their decision and informing the parents when they will do so, which will normally be within twenty term-time working days of receipt of the complaint in any event.

If the parents are not satisfied with the way in which the complaint has been dealt or are still unhappy with the outcome of the investigation and discussions, they may appeal, stating their reasons in writing to the Principal/designated member of the Advisory Board within 10 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of receipt of the decision. The Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence, or designated member of the Advisory Board) will take the process to Stage 3 below.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Parents who seek to invoke Stage 3 following failure to reach an earlier resolution will be referred to the designated member of the Advisory Board. The matter will then be referred to a Complaints Panel for consideration.

The Panel will consist of three people 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 will be appointed by the designated member of the Advisory Board. They, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as possible and within 20 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm).

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require (in writing) that further particulars of the complaint or any related matters be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties no later than 5 working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person, for example a relative or friend, but this accompanying person may not act in a professional capacity at the hearing. Parents of boarders may ask for a representative to be present if they are unable to attend the hearing. 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 5 term-time working days (9.00-5.00pm) 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. The Panel's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the complaint and a copy will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor and Principal.

All concerns or complaints are treated with appropriate confidentiality and are recorded in writing and kept on file by the Vice Principal along with details of the outcomes. Records include whether complaints are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing and actions taken by the school regardless of whether the complaint is upheld. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails. If parents are not satisfied with the outcomes, they may refer to the Department for Education/the

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Independent Schools Inspectorate. All documents relating to any concerns or complaints are kept confidential.

Summary of Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

Stage 1 will attempt to be resolved within 5 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Stage 2 the written complaint will be acknowledged within 3 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Further investigations maybe necessary, these should be completed within 7 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Written confirmation of the decision and reasons given for the decision should be shared within a further 7 term-time working days (9.00-5.00pm). If for any reason this is not possible, the Principal/Head of the Advisory Board will write to the parents within the 17 working term-time period referred to above, stating the reason or reasons why he is unable to issue his decision and informing the parents when he will do so, which will normally be within 20 term-time working days of receipt of the complaint in any event.

Parents can appeal stating their reasons in writing to the Principal within 10 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm) of receipt of the decision

Stage 3 the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as possible and within 20 term-time working days (9.00am-5.00pm).

If needed, further particulars should be supplied 5 working days prior to the hearing.

The Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 term-time working days (9.00-5.00pm) of the Panel Hearing.

EYFS Complaints timeframe – written complaints relating to the school’s fulfillment of the EYFS requirements, will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Retention

Records of complaints will be kept on file by the Vice Principal for a minimum of twenty years unless there was safeguarding angle. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Persistent Complaint

If stages 1, 2 and 3 have been adhered to in a particular complaint the process has ended.

Monitoring

The file of complaints is available for monitoring by the Proprietor and Advisors annually.

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EYFS Requirements

With reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage, written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days. We will keep the record of complaints for at least three years and the record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Boarding

With reference to Boarding, this policy has regard for Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2015).

Other Contacts

If a parent still has concerns about student welfare after following the procedure detailed above, they may contact either OFSTED or ISI:

OFSTED

NBU, 2nd Floor
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

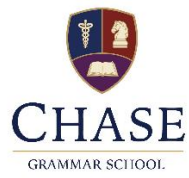
Tel: 08456 404040
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Independent Schools Inspectorate (Including complaints about boarding)

CAP House
9 - 12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA
Tel: 020 7600 0100; Fax: 020 7776 8849
Email: info@isi.net

Numbers of Complaints for Previous Year

[During 2023/2024 academic year, Chase Grammar School received 0 formal complaints. During 2023/2024 academic year, Chase Grammar International Study Centre received 11 formal complaints of which 9 were resolved at Stage 1 and 2 were resolved at Stage 2.]



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Authorised by Richard Baum, Director Achieve Education and Advisory Board Member

Achieve Education Director Signature: _____

Date: 17.09.2024