

# Complaints Policy

## Including Unreasonable and Persistent Complainants Policy

### Clarity Independent School

**Bridge Barn Farm  
Woodhill Road  
Sandon  
CM2 7SG**

**Clarity Independent School is committed to safeguarding...**

*"Our school is committed to our whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies... We promote an environment where children and young people feel empowered to raise concerns and report incidents and we work hard in partnership with pupils, parents and caregivers to keep children safe."*

Clarity Safeguarding Policy September 2025

**Written by Debbie Hanson**

Head Teacher and Proprietor

**Written: 13.11.18**

**This is version [8]**

**Update Date: November 2025**

**Name: Debbie Hanson**

**To be read in conjunction with the following policies:**

- Admissions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Examinations Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Behaviour Policy (including terminating placement contract)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, Grievance Procedure (staff handbook)
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Photo, Media and CCTV policy
- Data Protection Policy

## **Introduction**

Most issues raised by parents/carers, the community or pupils are concerns rather than complaints. Clarity Independent School is committed to taking concerns *seriously* at the *earliest* stage in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the concern or complaint, complainants may wish, or be asked to, follow our formal complaints procedure.

The aim of Clarity Independent School's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. All concerns and complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

This policy has been written in accordance with the 'Manner in Which Complaints are Handled' Standard in Part 7, Section 33 of the Education, England, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 made by the Secretary of State for Education in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 94(1) and (2) and 166(6) of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (1). For Independent Schools, this standard is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented, which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils effectively and in the following ways, (as detailed below.)

## **General Principles**

This procedure is intended to allow concerns or complaints relating to Clarity Independent School to be made.

The School has adopted this procedure for complaints from people who are parents/carers of pupils attending our school at the time the complaint is made. It does not cover matters where a process is already in place e.g., staff grievance, exams appeals, attendance or

exclusions. (See DfE 'Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures' (January 2021) for list of complaints not in scope of schools' complaints policies, e.g. safeguarding and child protection, complaints about staff members etc.)

The School may follow this procedure when dealing with complaints from others for e.g. pupils, members of the public, or from people who are accessing the services of the School at the time the complaint is made but reserves the right to substitute this procedure for an alternative process where it is appropriate to do so (for example Child Protection).

The Complaint Policy is accessible on the school website or can be requested from the school office.

#### **The aims of this procedure are:**

- to deal with any complaint against the School, by following the correct procedure
- to deal with all complaints thoroughly, sensitively and in a timely manner and by being open, honest, respectful and fair when dealing with the complainant

#### **Working together positively**

We expect our members of staff to be addressed in a respectful manner during the process and for communication to always remain appropriate. The complainant has a legal right to be heard through a complaints process, but nobody has a right to conduct themselves unpleasantly or knowingly cause distress for another person, no matter how strongly they feel.

The school reserves the right to discontinue any call or meeting if the complainant's conduct does not stay within courteous and considerate realms.

Discourteous and unreasonable written correspondence may not be responded to. The procedure under Part 2 (page 12) will only be used on very rare occasions to deal with unreasonably persistent complainants or unreasonable complainant behaviour.

When complaints are unreasonably persistent and numerous, the school will offer to work with the complainant directly, first to summarise their concerns and complaints into fewer, e.g. 2 or 3, main areas, and then hear these as overarching complaints.

If, at any stage, the School believes that the concern or complaint is vexatious and/or, has already been considered in full, reaching stage 4, or has been withdrawn by the complainant, the Headteacher may confirm in writing that she may not consider the concern or complaint under this procedure and the reasons why she has decided not to do

so. In this eventuality, the individual with the concern or complaint may proceed directly to Stage 4 of this procedure.

### **Understanding This Procedure**

To investigate a complaint as fully as possible, a 4-staged approach is implemented. It is anticipated that almost all complaints that arise will be resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2.

To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the School's attention as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event being complained of, will not be considered. However, we may reconsider this in exceptional circumstances.

An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is usually logged on the school's External Incident Log.

If, under extenuating circumstances, it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, the complainant will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales.

In cases of 'complaint campaigns', where numerous similar complaints are received from a variety of complainants working collaboratively, the school reserves the right to address the complainants simultaneously and respond to them using the same written response or through a message on the school website.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, including at what stage they were resolved, and details of any actions taken by the school because of the complaints regardless of whether they were upheld or not.

In this procedure "school days" excludes weekends, bank holidays, INSET days and Clarity Independent School holidays. Our term dates can be viewed on the School website.

### **Confidentiality**

For complaints to be resolved as quickly and fairly as possible, the School requests that complainants do not discuss complaints with other parents / carers / service users privately, publicly, in word or writing, or via social media. Complaints will be dealt with confidentiality by the school staff team for those involved and we hope and expect complainants will observe the same standards.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where access is requested by the Secretary of State (under Section 109

of the 2008 Act), or where disclosure is required during a school inspection, Local Authority monitoring visit, or under other legal authority or as part of safeguarding procedures.

## **Data Protection**

Meetings and phone calls will be captured on the school's secure CCTV system and reviewed for the purposes of accurate minute taking (please see Photo, Media and CCTV Policy.) Minutes will be shared between all attending parties. Once the minutes have been agreed and after the automatic CCTV system retention period of 30 days, the recording is deleted. The recording will not be shared except for reasons in the above policy.

The school does not permit its staff to conduct meetings or phone calls that are recorded by other parties, for the reasons of: confidentiality; security; data protection, storage and retention; and in accordance with ICO requirements for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out, risk assessing the rationale of usage, protection, storage and retention of such voice recorded data. Persistence in attempting to record verbal communication will mean that the meeting will need to be adjourned and reconvened in writing by letter or email.

Similarly, if the complainant or other party involved in hearing the concern / complaint does not wish to be recorded, in some circumstances it *may* be possible for either another member of staff or assistive technology to take minutes so that the meeting may continue; however, this may not be achievable if school administration capacity is limited at that time. In this case, the meeting / phone call will need to be reconvened in writing, by letter or email.

## **Definitions**

A 'concern' may be defined as '*an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought*'.

A 'complaint' may be defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.

**(DfE Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures January 2021 p4).**

A 'question' is defined as '*a request for information to be provided, or an enquiry made about a process, which requires an answer to be given.*' These are usually able to be dealt with quickly within 3 working days of receipt without proceeding through the complaints process.

A 'comment' or 'opinion' is defined as '*a viewpoint which may be shared by parents / carers, which the school is happy to hear and consider*'; however, the final decision rests within the School staff team, led by the Senior Leadership Team and in turn by the Headteacher, as to whether the suggestion / feedback / opinions expressed can be adopted into school policy and practice. These are also usually heard without proceeding through the complaints process.

## The Procedure: Part One

### Stage 1 – Raising a Concern

The school staff team all work tirelessly to ensure that positive relationships are built and maintained between school staff and parents / carers, as well as the outside community. At times when this has not been able to be achieved fully, we value informal meetings and discussions and encourage parents to approach teaching staff directly with any concerns they may have about pupil-related matters, or for an administrative issue, to approach the School Office.

Contact may be by letter, by telephone, by email, by online meeting (Zoom or Teams for example) or in person by appointment. We aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding. Concerns / questions / feedback / comments will often generate an immediate response, or within 24 hours, which will resolve the concern and answer the questions. We ask the relevant staff to alert the Headteacher via CPOMS records, for oversight and quality assurance, and to use the flag 'Concerns made about the school by a parent / carer'.

On some occasions, the concern may require investigation or discussion with others, in which case, an informal but informed response will be received within a maximum of 10 working days. The complainant will be notified of the expected timeframe. Most concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at this stage, they may decide to proceed to Stage 2.

If the school feels that the matter should proceed to stage 2, then it has the right to request that the complainant considers whether they want to progress the concern to a stage 2 complaint within 10 working days of the request, or the concern will be regarded as withdrawn.

### Stage 2 - Registering a Formal Complaint

If a concern or complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at the informal stage or they wish the complaint to be dealt with immediately as a formal complaint, the complaint must be made in writing to the Head Teacher of the School. (Administration assistance may be given to parents needing this, by the school office, where required.)

If a complaint is **about** the Head Teacher, it should be sent firstly to the Assistant Headteacher teacher, who will direct the complaint to the correct person, depending on its nature:

- If the complaint is about the Headteacher's conduct in dealing with a matter about which the complainant has already made a formal complaint, which has reached stage 4 of the complaint procedure, it is not possible to hear the complaint again; therefore, the parent / carer will be reassured through the Assistant Headteacher signposting them to alternative agencies who might be able to assist them further.
- If a complainant believes the Headteacher has behaved in a way which has harmed or might harm a child, has possibly committed a criminal offence against a child, or behaved in a way suggesting they are unsuitable to work with children, the complainant must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer ([LADO](#)). (<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/safeguarding/report-concern-about-member-workforce>)

Written formal complaints should use the form / format of Appendix 3 of this Policy and include details which might assist the investigation, such as the nature of the complaint, details of how the matter has been dealt with so far, the names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of all relevant documents. It is very important that complainants include a clear statement of the actions that they would like the school to take, to resolve their concern.

A formal complaint will be acknowledged on the same working day of receipt.

Within 5 working days, a response will be given to report on the action the school has taken or intends to take to resolve the issue. Complainants may need to be invited to a meeting to clarify their concerns. Where possible this meeting will normally take place within 10 school-working days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible, including what they feel the school could have done to resolve the issue. They may be accompanied by one other person, such as a relative or friend (who should not be legally qualified) to assist them in explaining the nature of their concerns.

If necessary, witnesses will be interviewed, and statements taken from those involved. Once all the relevant facts have been established as far as possible, the complainant will be provided with a written response to the complaint, including details of what action the school will take to resolve the complaint and what to do if they are still not satisfied with the outcome. Where possible this will be within 15 school days of receipt of the complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at this stage, or they decline the invitation to a meeting, or the complaint cannot be resolved through meeting together, arrangements will be made for the matter to be formally investigated at stage 3.

### Stage 3 –Complaints Panel Hearing

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Headteacher under the (Stage 2: Registering a Formal Complaint) Formal Stage, they may request that the stage 2 outcome is considered by a Complaints Panel.

Their request will only be considered at Stage 3, if they have completed the relevant procedures at Stages 1 and 2.

To request a hearing before the Complaints Panel, they should write to the Headteacher, Clarity Independent School, Bridge Farm Barn, Opposite Mayes Lane, Woodhill Road, Sandon CM2 7SG within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of the Formal Stage 2.

Your request will be acknowledged within 5 school days.

Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to be arranged within 15 school-working days of receipt of your letter. Three dates will be offered to the complainant. If none of these are convenient the panel reserves the right to proceed with the hearing based on written evidence.

#### **The Hearing**

The aim of the hearing is to consider why the complainant thinks the outcome of the stage 2 process is incorrect and to achieve reconciliation between Clarity Independent School and the complainant.

Any documents from either the complainant themselves or the Headteacher to be considered by the panel, and the names of any witnesses who might be called, must be received by the clerk at least 5 working days before the meeting.

At least 3 working days before the meeting date, the clerk will circulate to the members of the Complaints Panel, the complainant, the Headteacher and at the sole discretion of the Complaints Panel, any person requested by the Complaints Panel to attend the meeting:

- The agenda of the meeting of the Complaints Panel
- The complainant's letter notifying the Headteacher that they wish to proceed to Stage 3 of the Complaints procedure.
- The original formal complaint letter
- The letter from the investigator issued under Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure

- Any relevant documents referred to or relied on at any earlier stage of the Formal Procedure
- Any relevant documents on which the Complaints Panel members will seek to rely at the Complaints Panel meeting.

In addition, the Headteacher will copy relevant papers to any members of staff named in the complaint.

The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and may bring with them one other person such as a friend or relative, who should not be legally qualified. If they intend to be represented, they will need to advise the Clerk to the Complaints Panel prior to the meeting. The Headteacher will attend and may also bring a representative. Other members of staff may be asked to be present; they also have the right to bring a representative.

The hearing will be conducted by a panel of at least 3 people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. This will comprise of both:

- One person who is independent of the management and running of the School (i.e., outside the school's workforce, not a governor or the proprietor, not otherwise involved with the management of the School).
- Two members of staff from the School.

Where it is not possible to convene a panel of people who have not previously been involved in the complaint, staff from other local schools may be appointed to sit on the Panel. The clerk will also attend the hearing to keep a record of the hearing and the decision reached.

Unless otherwise stated, the procedure for an appeal is as follows:

- The complainant and Headteacher will enter the hearing together
- The Chair of the Review Panel will introduce the panel members and outline the process
- The complainant will make representations (explain the complaint)
- The Headteacher and Panel members will question the complainant
- The Headteacher will make representations
- The complainant and the Panel members will question the Headteacher

- Witnesses may be called (subject to the prior approval of the Chair) and all parties will have the right to question all the witnesses.
- The complainant will summarise their complaint
- The Headteacher will summarise the School's actions
- The Chair of the panel will explain that both parties will hear from the Panel within 5 school days
- Both parties will leave together while the Panel decides
- The Clerk will stay to assist the Panel with its decision making

If the complainant does not attend the meeting, the Chair has discretion to proceed based on written evidence, or to adjourn at any stage.

### **The Outcome**

After the hearing, the Panel will consider their decision and inform the complainant and the Headteacher of their decision in writing within 5 school days. The letter will set out the decision of the Panel together with the reasons underpinning that decision. The decision of the findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor.

The Panel can:

- Request further information from you and/or the school to assist them in making their decision
- 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 School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not reoccur

### **Stage 4 - Referral to an External Agency**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Review Panel, they are entitled to refer their complaint to **The Department for Education (DfE)**.

The DfE cannot investigate individual complaints about private (Independent) schools themselves, but it has certain powers as a regulator if the school is not meeting standards (Independent School Standards) set by DfE for:

- education
- pupil welfare and health and safety
- school premises
- staff suitability
- making information available to parents
- spiritual, moral, social or cultural development of students

The DfE will consider any reports of a major failure to meet the standards.

It can arrange an emergency ISI / Ofsted inspection to look at pupil welfare and health and safety, and make sure serious failings are dealt with.

DfE can ask the school inspectorates to take minor complaints into account when the school is next inspected.

A complaint can be made to the DfE by completing the school online complaints form (see what this looks like below) using the link below or conducting an online search: "How to complain about an Independent School."

**The form can be found here:**

[https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact\\_the\\_Department\\_for\\_Education](https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact_the_Department_for_Education)

The DfE will provide a virtual assistant to help you complete this form if required.

This is a sample of the online form to assist parents in its location.

# Contact the Department for Education

**Contact type** Declaration

I would like to submit a:

- question
- comment
- complaint
- disclosure in the public interest (including whistleblowing)
- freedom of information (FOI) request
- subject access request

## Ask our virtual assistant for parents and carers

Parents and carers can [ask our virtual assistant](#) about:

- school attendance
- school admissions
- elective home education
- the school complaints process

[Continue](#)

## The Procedure: Part Two

### **Unreasonably Persistent Complainants / Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy**

There are rare circumstances where we will deviate from any stage of the Complaints Procedure set out in Part One and may decide not to continue hearing the complaint. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- where the complainant's behaviour towards staff or members of the Complaints Panel is unacceptable, for example, is unmannerly, offensive or threatening, or makes insulting personal comments towards staff;
- where, because of the frequency and repetition of their contact with the School, the complainant is hindering the consideration of their or other people's complaints and/or the proper running of the School;
- where the complaint is extensive and drawn out in nature so that it is not possible to process easily, and the complainant is not willing to work with staff support (or other support) to summarise their complaint;
- where the complaint is vexatious and/or has patently insufficient grounds;
- where the complaint is the same, like, or based on the same facts of a complaint from the same complainant which has already been considered in full by the School;
- where the complainant continues to communicate with the School about the complaint once it is closed, in which case we may notify and then terminate any return contact with that complainant. In this case, all future correspondence received will be read, but unless there is recent, additional evidence which affects our decision on the complaint, we will simply acknowledge it or place it on file with no acknowledgement. Any new complaints from complainants who have come under the unreasonable or persistent complainant's policy will be treated on their merits;
- where the complainant declines to co-operate with the complaints investigation process whilst still wishing their complaint to be resolved, or insists the complaint is dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or good practice;
- where the complainant: adds new information to the complaint, which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on; raises large numbers of detailed questions and excessive demands on the time and resources of staff, whilst a complaint

is being investigated, e.g. excessive telephone calls, emails to multiple or single staff, emails using multiple threads, lengthy complex letters, which are particularly time consuming and costly to respond to; or insists they are all fully answered immediately;

- where the complainant adopts a 'scattergun' approach: pursuing a complaint or complaints with the School, at the same time, with a Member of Parliament / councillor / the Local Authority's independent auditor / the Local Authority / the DfE / Ofsted / ISI / solicitors / the ombudsman etc. or encouraging other people in the school community to join their campaign;
- where the complainant declines to believe information provided along the Complaints Procedure or the findings of the investigation, where the complaints procedure has been implemented and completed including referral to the DfE;
- where the complainant uses falsified information;
- where the complainant publishes the complaint, in part or whole, in any of a variety of media e.g., social media, websites and newspapers.

**In these circumstances, we may:**

- inform the complainant that their behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, ask them to change it;
- restrict the complainant's access to the School e.g.:
  - restricting contact to a particular format (e.g., letters or emails only)
  - requiring contact to take place with a named member of staff only
  - restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
  - prohibiting the complainant from the School's premises;
- conduct the Review Panel on the papers only i.e., not hold a hearing;
- decline to consider the complaint and refer the complainant directly to Stage 4.

In all cases we will write to tell the complainant why we believe their behaviour is unacceptable or unreasonably persistent, what action we are taking and the duration of that action. We will also tell them how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it. Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, pupils or members of the Complaints Panel or public, we will consider other options, for example, reporting the matter to the Police or taking legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant prior warning of that action.

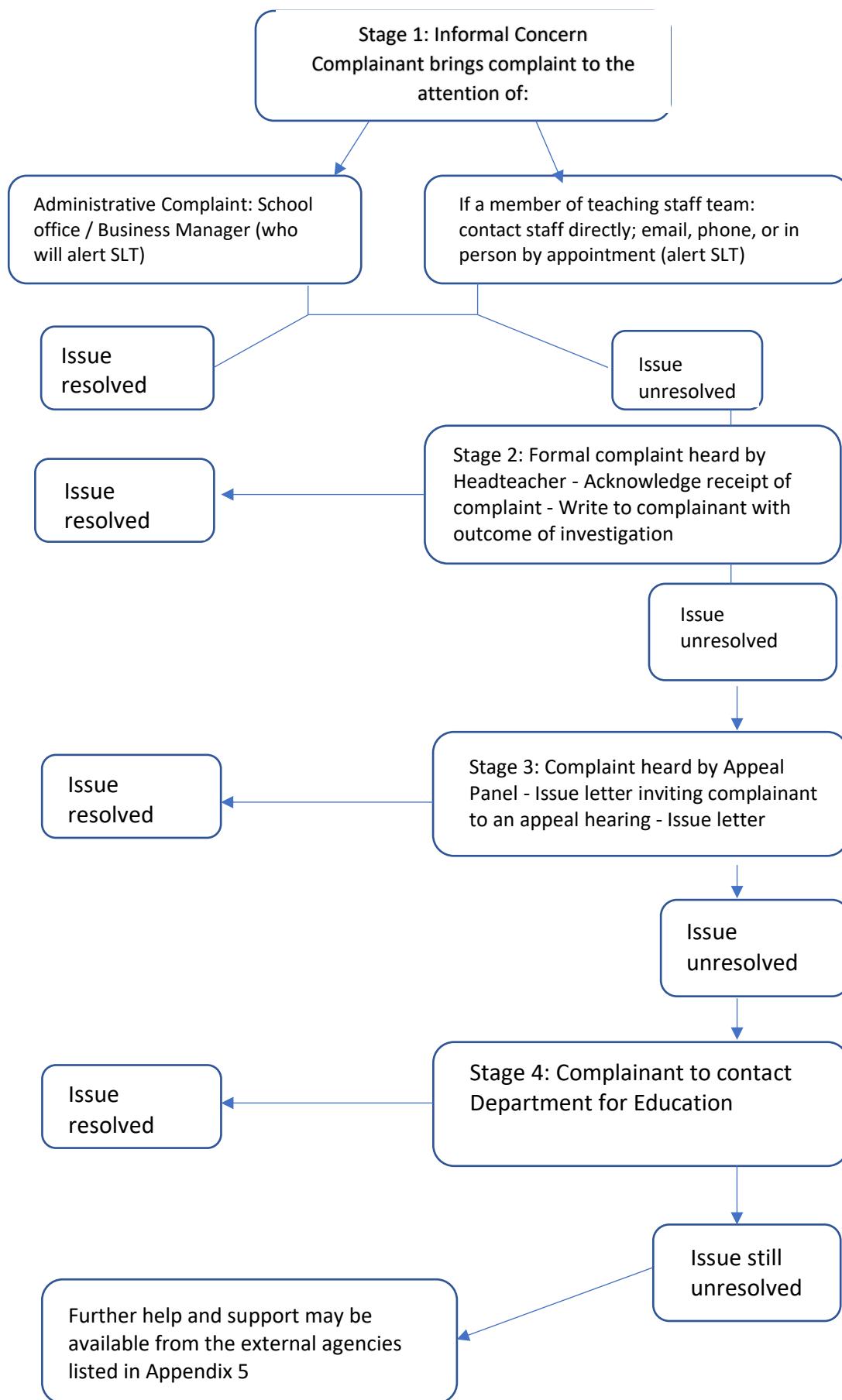
## Appendix 1: Good practice communication between staff, parents and professionals

At Clarity Independent School, we ask that these principles are adhered to throughout all forms of communication, to protect and ensure fairness for all parties involved.

For example, (but not limited to):

- Sharing the agenda / aim of the meeting with all parties before the meeting takes place, or at the beginning of a phone call, to allow all parties to be prepared
- Confirming that confidentiality and privacy is intact for all parties, and verifying that no one may be accidentally in ear shot
- Confirming the status regarding recording of meetings, minutes, sharing of these, including roles and preferred contact medium
- Confirmation that safeguarding always comes first and will override everything else regarding people's priorities, data protection and sharing
- All parties are encouraged to:
  - Keep contributions brief and address only one point at once to allow others to respond
  - Adhere to the agenda and postpone any additional points for another meeting or to address them by email later (unless the Chair agrees it is important to be included in the meeting)
  - When meeting virtually, keep their microphone muted until it is their turn to speak by virtue of using the 'raise hand' icon on the screen or being directed by the Chair
- Confirmation that at any time during the meeting, any person can request a 5-minute adjournment, for any reason and it will be granted.
- Introductions made by each party, name, role and interest in the meeting.
- The meeting begins with the first item on the agenda, each step will be prompted and introduced by the Chair.
- At the close, the Chair briefly revises all actions to be taken by each party and confirms that draft minutes will be sent out for all parties to contribute towards by email.
- The Chair thanks everyone for their involvement in the meeting and closes the meeting for everyone at the same time.

## Appendix 2: Summary of Complaints Procedure



## Appendix 3: Complaints Form

*Please use the following headings when making a formal complaint, for your complaint to be heard as quickly and efficiently as possible. (Please contact the School Office if you require administrative assistance completing this form.)*

Date:

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):

Address:

Telephone number (day):

Telephone number (evening):

Please give brief details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?

(Who did you speak to and what was their response?):

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork?

If so, please give details:

Signature (complainant):

Date:

(Please sign if providing by hand / Royal Mail (otherwise we can accept your signature at the bottom of your email if sending by electronic transfer)

## Appendix 4: Contact Details

### Informal Complaints

Clarity Independent School

Bridge Farm Barn

Opposite Mayes Lane

Woodhill Road

Sandon

CM2 7SG

Tel: 01245 408 606

teacher's [name.surname@clarity.essex.sch.uk](mailto:name.surname@clarity.essex.sch.uk) (PLEASE CC THE ADMIN OFFICE IN on [admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk)) OR email [admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk) directly

### Formal Complaints

Headteacher

Clarity Independent School

Bridge Farm Barn

Opposite Mayes Lane

Woodhill Road

Sandon

CM2 7SG

Tel: 01245 408 606

[d.hanson@clarity.essex.sch.uk](mailto:d.hanson@clarity.essex.sch.uk)

### Referral to Review Panel

Headteacher

Clarity Independent School

Bridge Farm Barn

Opposite Mayes Lane

Woodhill Road

Sandon

CM2 7SG

Tel: 01245 408 606

[d.hanson@clarity.essex.sch.uk](mailto:d.hanson@clarity.essex.sch.uk)

## Appendix 5: Other agencies to contact for further assistance

Should the above policies and procedures not address or resolve the content of your complaint, the following organisations may be able to assist you further:

### In the instance complaints relating to:

- Discrimination, please contact Equality Advisory Support Service  
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>
- Data protection, please contact Information Commissioner's Office  
<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/handling/>
- Exam malpractice or maladministration, please see our Examinations Complaints and Appeals Procedure Policy or contact the Office of Qualifications and Exams Regulations (Ofqual) and relevant awarding body  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>
- Criminal behaviour, please contact the Police on 101.
- Employment matters (staff), please follow our Grievance Procedure in our Staff Handbook or refer to the School's other published policies, e.g. Whistleblowing Procedure or contact the Employment Tribunal Service  
<https://www.gov.uk/employment-tribunals> or ACAS 0300 123 1100 or 0300 123 1150 [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
- Child protection, if you are worried about a child, please refer to the Children and Families' Hub 0345 603 7627.
- Child protection, if you are worried a member of staff may have harmed a child or is about to harm a child, please refer to the Local Authority designated officer LADO.
- A young person's EHCP needs / statutory assessment process / update, please refer to your SENDOPS service (SEND Operations Service) Tel: 0333 013 9949 or [EHCRequestMid@essex.gov.uk](mailto:EHCRequestMid@essex.gov.uk).
- For information about the Local Offer: SEND team and support services at the Local Authority (email [essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk](mailto:essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk))
- For free, confidential and impartial advice on issues relating to special educational needs and disabilities: SENDIASS (SEND information, advice and support service) Web: [www.essexsendiass.co.uk](http://www.essexsendiass.co.uk), or email [send.iass@essex.gov.uk](mailto:send.iass@essex.gov.uk) or call 01245 204 338.
- To make an appeal against a local authority decision on the special educational needs of children and young people: to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Education Needs and Disability) service formerly the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>
- The quality of education or leadership, or concerns affecting the School as a whole, please contact Ofsted <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

## Further assistance:

- Essex Family Forum: an independent group of parents and carers of children and young people (0-25) with additional needs and disabilities (<https://essexfamilyforum.org/>)
- IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice) who are a registered charity operating in England, offering free and independent legally based information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and families with all kinds of special educational needs and disabilities. [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk) (<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/contact-ipsea>)
- Families in Focus Essex are a leading independent parent led registered charity providing holistic support to families of children with disabilities and special needs (0 to 25) across Essex, who require advice, information and support, particularly at times of change, challenge and crisis. <https://www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk> Tel: 01245 353 575

## **Appendix 6: The School's Formal Complaints Log for internal use**

The School's internal Complaints Log is kept securely on CPOMS and is used to provide strategic oversight of complaints made, to monitor and quality assure the School's handling of complaints in accordance with this Complaints Procedure. This is part of the school's accountability procedures, which is rigorously monitored by external Inspectorates.