



British College La Cañada

Whole School

COMPLAINTS POLICY



Introduction

We take great care with the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to our pupils. However, if parents do wish to make a complaint they can expect the following procedure to apply.

Working day - For the purposes of this procedure, 'working days' shall mean working days during school term time.

Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Complaint

- It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's teacher in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved at this level to the parents' satisfaction.
- If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult primarily with their Key Stage Coordinator..
 - Any complaints made directly to the Head/Principal will usually be referred back to the relevant member of staff unless the Head/Principal considers it more appropriate to deal with the matter personally. Should this be the case, the aim will still be to resolve the matter informally. However, the involvement of the Head/Principal at this stage will be in exceptional circumstances.
- Stage 1 complaints will normally be addressed within 7 working days from the point at which they are received. Where there are reasons which prevent this from happening, the staff member dealing with the complaint will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
 - Should the matter not be resolved informally, despite the teacher's best efforts, then the parents are able to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.



Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

- If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint informally, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take including the person to take the lead in any investigation.
- The Head will respond to parents within five working days indicating how the school proposes to proceed.
 - It may be necessary for the Head, or the person taking the lead, to carry out further investigations. If this is the case then written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
 - Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, during the course of the investigation, a decision will be made in relation to the complaint within 10 working days from the date the complaint was received. Parents will be informed of the decision, and the reasoning behind it, in writing.
- Where it is not possible to give a full reply within 10 working days, the Head will notify the parents and provide an amended time frame.
 - It is expected that a resolution will be reached at this stage and that parents will feel assured that all of their concerns have been fully and fairly considered. If, in extreme circumstances, parents are not satisfied with the process they are able to bring into play Stage 3 of this procedure.
- Note: Should a parent wish to raise a complaint about the Head they should contact the Principal by telephone or writing in the first instance. This will trigger contact to clarify and discuss the matter. Where there is a complaint against the Head/Principal, the Owner will appoint an investigator. These complaints will normally be dealt with within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- Where the parents are not satisfied with the response or process undertaken at Stage 2, the matter will be referred to a Complaints Panel.



- Parents should request a referral to a Complaints Panel by completing the form at the back of this document.
- A complaint form should be delivered by post or by email to the Office.
- BCLC will acknowledge receipt of the Stage 3 complaint and will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 working days of receiving the Stage 3 complaint.
- The Appeal Panel will be appointed by the Owner/Principal and at least one of the three members shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The members of the Appeal Panel will have no connection to the pupil or the family concerned and will not have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- If the Chair of the Appeal Panel deems it necessary, s/he may require that further particulars of the complaint/appeal and any relevant documents or records be supplied in advance of the panel meeting. Copies of such particulars will be supplied to all the parties wherever practicable and not later than 3 working days prior to this hearing.
 - The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation is not permitted. Recordings of hearings are not permitted.
- If possible the Appeal Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
 - A written record of the proceedings will be taken and kept, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing. Any action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) are kept.
- After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of their decision and the reasons for it.
- The Panel's findings and recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Head/Principal and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made. A copy of any complaint and findings/recommendations will be held confidentially and made available for inspection in the school by the proprietor and by inspectors on request.



- This exhausts the complaints procedure after the decision has been communicated in writing. The decision of the Appeal Panel is Final

Recording of complaints

All complaints which have reached Stages 2 or 3 are duly recorded in the School Complaint Register, including the outcome of the individual complaint and any actions taken as a result. The stage at which the complaint is concluded is recorded.

Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. The exceptions to confidentiality are the Secretary of State or an inspection body. The School will make available to an inspectorate on request a written record of any complaints made during a specified period and the action which was taken as a result.

Publication

This procedure is published on the school website.

Provisions relating to complaints dealt with using this procedure

For the avoidance of doubt, no complaint may be made under this procedure in respect of matters which have already been dealt with in an appeal under the School's Behaviour Policy.

- This procedure will not be relevant where other statutory or organisational provisions apply, for example, child protection, racial incidents or special educational provision. If concerns relate to child protection matters, the appropriate local social services procedures will be followed. If the concerns relate to school exclusion, the Exclusion Policy and Procedure will apply.
- This procedure cannot be used to deal with appeals following expulsion or removal. There is a separate procedure in place in accordance with the parent contract.
- A complaint can be made by any parent (or person deemed to have parental responsibility under the terms of the Children Act 2004) of a pupil registered at the school.



- A complaint cannot be raised in relation to a pupil who has left the school. The child is taken off roll on the final day of the term in which they leave.
- When the complaint concerns only the matter of finance such as fees in lieu which remain outstanding, the matter of the fees owed alone falls outside the scope of this procedure. The Head/Principal of the School remains responsible for all financial decisions.
- Complaints from groups of parents linked to the leadership team and/or management style will not be heard collectively. Confidentiality must be maintained for each individual complaint.

There have been **two** complaints that have reached the formal written stage during the 2023/2024 academic year.

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Audience: Parents and Pupils at BCLC Staff at BCLC
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British College La Cañada School Formal Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to the school office or to the Head Teacher / Principal who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Basic details	
Name of school	
Your name	
Pupils name	
Relationship to pupil	
Address	
Email address	
Daytime contact number	
Mobile Number	

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc....), to allow the matter to be fully investigated.

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You may continue on separate paper or attach documents if you wish.

How have you already expressed your concern to the school? We cannot investigate your complaint if you have not taken the opportunity to address your concern at an early stage (ie who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

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

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Signature	
Name	
Date	

School use:



Date form received:

Received by:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint and invitation to meet

Dear [Insert name of complainant]

I have received your formal complaint, dated and I am grateful that you have brought this to my attention.

The school and its management take any complaint seriously. Therefore, I would like to meet with you, as soon as possible, so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. You are welcome to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend if you would find this helpful.

Please telephone..... to arrange an appointment OR I can offer you an appointment at on Please let me know if this is convenient. I hope we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not, I will ensure the appropriate investigation takes place.

Yours sincerely,

Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint referred by a third party [eg LA, Diocese, MP]

Dear [Insert name of complainant]

I have received a copy of the documentation that you sent in to setting out a complaint about This has been passed to the school because it has responsibility for these matters. The school and its management take any complaint seriously. Therefore, I would like to meet with you so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. Please telephone to arrange an appointment OR I can offer you an appointment at on Please let me know if this is convenient.



Meanwhile, I'd be grateful if you would complete and return the formal complaint form that is enclosed, along with details of the school's complaints procedure. I hope we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not, I will ensure the appropriate investigation takes place.

Yours sincerely,

Review outcome notification

Dear,

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint. Summary of reasons Therefore, we now consider the matter closed.

OR

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except Therefore, the following action will be taken Once this action has been completed, the school will consider the matter to be closed.

OR

After careful consideration of your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the governing body's complaints review panel has concluded the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except However, the panel determined this procedural failure did not affect the outcome of the consideration of your complaint, so while we regret this error, we will now school complaints procedure consider this matter to be closed as far as the school is concerned.

Yours sincerely,



Chair of complaints review panel