

## **Complaints Procedure**

At Smallbrook School, we value and promote honest and open communication between staff and pupils. The creation and maintenance of this open style of communication is one of the chief means by which we seek to influence our pupils and lies at the heart of supporting young people using appropriate intervention strategies.

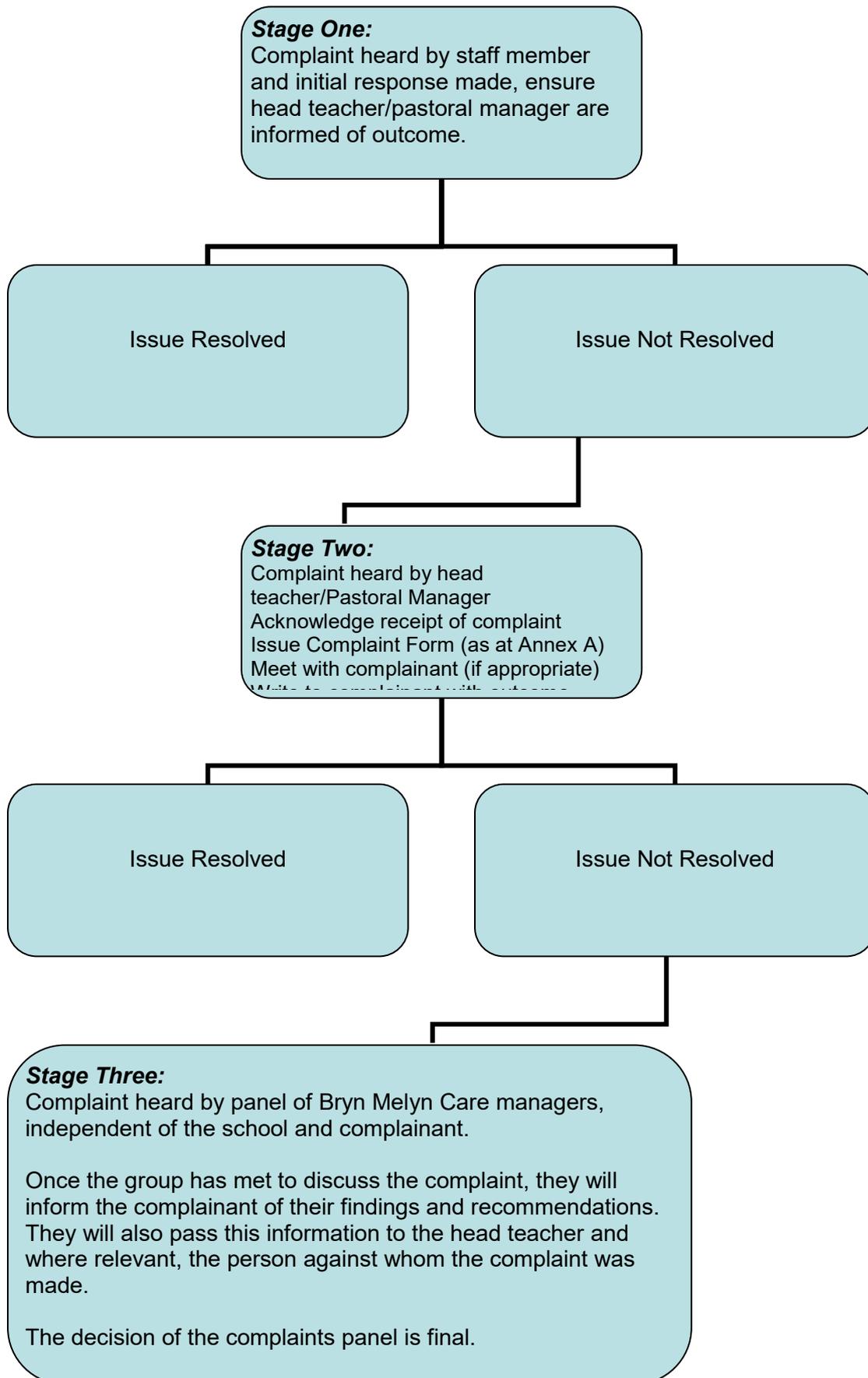
One aspect of crucial importance in this lies in adopting a complaints procedure that is easy to follow by pupils and enables them to ascertain the procedures clearly that are in place to ensure that they are listened to. We have a duty to empower pupils wherever possible and maintain a positive caring environment in which they feel safe and free from any form of oppression. We also have a statutory duty to make clear our procedures for dealing with complaints under The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. This policy is aimed at adhering to these standards and enabling both pupils and those with an interest in our pupils, the opportunity easily follow the procedures. A young person's guide to the complaints procedures is also available on request.

The complainant should be advised that complaints could always be directed outside the business, to the regulatory authority or the placing authority.

Complaints or allegations of mistreatment or significant harm by staff/carers must be dealt with by way of the Child Protection Referral Procedures, not as complaints.

See Child and Adult Protection Procedure, which contains procedures on referring suspicions or allegations of significant harm.

## Summary of Dealing with Complaints Flowchart



## **Stage 1**

As a school that forms part of a care organisation, it is essential that we not only act when faced with challenges, but are seen to act. Therefore, the school complaints procedure must be explicit and transparent to all.

The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. To that end, if staff are made aware of the procedures, they will know what to do when they receive a complaint. It is essential that the school respect the views of a complainant who indicates that he/she would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff. In these cases, the complainant will be referred to another designated member of staff or head teacher (if not implicated in the complaint)

In most circumstances, any concerns or worries raised can be discussed with a member of school staff and put to rest. This is known as an '*informal resolution*'. However, there may be occasions when complaints cannot be satisfactorily dealt with in this manner. In these instances, the following procedures should be followed:-

## **Stage 2**

If a solution or agreement cannot be reached by talking things through, there is the option of making a '*formal complaint*'. This can be done by talking to a member of staff at Smallbrook School, either face to face or over the telephone. If it is preferred a complaint can be made in writing and sent either to Smallbrook School or to Bryn Melyn Care Head Office.

## **What happens next?**

Once the complaint has been issued, the head teacher/Pastoral Manager or one of Bryn Melyn Care managers will speak to you as soon as possible – this should be within a maximum of 5 working days of receiving the complaint. The Headteacher or manager will ensure the complaint is recorded on the appropriate form, to be signed for verification by the complainant. The complaint will be discussed with the complainant and the complaints procedures will be clarified. The complainant will be informed of the result of the investigation within 4 weeks.

## **Stage 3**

It is hoped that all complaints will have been successfully resolved, but if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, a request for reconsideration will be considered. Requests for reconsideration should be made to the Headteacher/Pastoral Manager or Bryn Melyn Care Head Office.

Another manager from Bryn Melyn Care will contact the complainant within 5 working days. He or she will arrange the complaint to be looked at by a panel of at least three people who were not involved in the details of the complaint. A young person making a complaint can expect that someone with parental responsibility for them will be invited to discuss the complaint with this group. Complainants have a right to be accompanied to this meeting should they wish.

One of the people at this hearing will be independent of the management and running of the school.

Once the group has met to discuss the complaint, they will inform the complainant of their findings and recommendations. They will also pass this information to the Headteacher and where relevant, the person against whom the complaint was made.

The correspondence, statements and written records of a complaint that reaches Stage 2 and/or Stage 3 will be kept confidentially on record within the school premises and a copy will be sent to the proprietor of the school.

Written records will be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.

## APENDIX A

### Example of a complaint form

Please complete and return to School Administrator who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:	
Pupil's name:	
Your relationship to the pupil:	
Address:	

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint.  
(Whom did you speak to and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use  
Date acknowledgement  
sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

<b>Policy Reviewed By: CRS</b>	<b><u>Signature</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
<b>Next Review Date: May 23</b>	<b>CRS</b>	<b>29 04 20</b>
<b>Interim Review Comments:</b> No update required		
<b>Policy Reviewed By:</b>		
<b>Next Review Date:</b>		
<b>Interim Review Comments:</b>		
<b>Policy Reviewed By:</b>		
<b>Next Review Date:</b>		
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