

COMPLAINTS POLICY



Sponsors' Statement

All The Bishop of Winchester Academy policies exist to support the Sponsors' vision, Christian ethos and values that are embedded in the day-to-day and long term running of the Academy. Each policy evidences the commitment of the Sponsors to the principles and values of honesty, respect, hospitality, compassion, love, forgiveness, self-discipline, creativity and hope. This policy contributes to the development of young people and the community through all Academy activities and in particular through the specialism of Enterprise and Innovation, and Maths.

Introduction

The Governing Body of The Bishop of Winchester Academy aims to provide an appropriate learning experience for all students, whatever their colour, origin, culture, gender, religion or ability. The Academy has high expectations of all students.

We undertake to provide a friendly and safe environment in which students will be helped to achieve their potential, both academically and socially. We recognise, however, that sometimes things can go wrong and parents/carers may need to raise a concern or make a complaint they have with the Academy. This policy tells you what to do if this happens.

Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Governing Body of The Bishop of Winchester Academy and remain under constant review by a designated member of the Academy Leadership Team.

Procedures for dealing with complaints:

The majority of issues raised are concerns rather than complaints. We are 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 complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the Academy's formal complaints procedure. For the Academy to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made as soon as possible following the incident. If a complaint is older than six months it will not be investigated.

The prime aim of The Bishop of Winchester Academy's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the Academy.

Any complaints concerning the conduct of Academy staff will be handled in accordance with the Academy's internal disciplinary procedures. Such an investigation will remain confidential and therefore the outcome of this will not be shared with parents/carers.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally and dealt with by a staff member.

Stage 2 – Formal complaint is heard by the Principal or designated member of the Academy's Leadership Team. The formal procedures are only invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Stage 3 – Complaint is heard by Local Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.

Stage 1 – Raising a concern:

Concerns can be raised with the Academy at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The Academy requests that parents/carers make their first contact with the student's Mentor or Subject Teacher.

It is important for parents/carers to recognise that the Academy is a busy organisation and that whilst we will do our best, it may not be possible to offer an appointment immediately.

On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within five Academy working days. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way.

However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, please write to the Academy within ten Academy working days of receipt of the response and complete the Academy's Complaints Pro-forma stating what you would like the Academy to do. The Academy will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by the Principal or member of the Academy's Leadership Team:

Formal complaints should be put in writing, addressed to the Principal and the Academy's Complaints Pro-forma completed. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received, and the Principal shall allocate the complaint to himself or a member of the Academy's Leadership Team. The Academy will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days of receiving it and state who is dealing with the complaint. In many cases this response will also report on the action the Academy has taken to resolve the issue, however, if the issue requires complex investigation (e.g. interviewing a number of people) it may take up to five Academy working days. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further.

This meeting will normally take place within ten Academy working days from receipt of the formal complaint. The aim will be to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 2 please write to the Academy within ten Academy working days of receiving its response. You will need to tell the Academy why you are still not satisfied and what you would like the Academy to do.

At stage 2 a Governor may assist the Principal or member of the Leadership Team in responding and/or in any meeting to discuss the matter further.

Stage 3 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel:

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the Principal will arrange for the complaint to be forwarded to the Chair of the Governing Body. The Governing Body will form a Complaints Appeal Panel. Members of the Panel will be independent and will therefore have had no involvement in previous investigations,

including at stage 2. At least one member of the Panel will also be independent of the management and running of the Academy.

A hearing will normally take place within ten Academy working days on receipt of the written request for stage 3 of the complaint. You will be invited to attend this hearing and may be accompanied by a companion.

The aim of the Complaints Appeal Panel hearing is to independently consider the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the Academy and the Complainant. All parties will be notified of the Complaints Appeal Panel's decision in writing within three Academy working days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also contain what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further although it should be noted that the decision of the Governing Body's Complaint Panel is final.

NOTE:

Allegations of abuse involving a member of the Academy staff must be reported to the Principal immediately. Allegations of abuse involving the Principal must be reported to the Chair of the Governing Body immediately.

In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Principal, the Chair of the Governing Body will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of the Governing Body will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Academy Leadership team as part of the Academy annual review process.

This policy will be reviewed and submitted to the Governing Body. This will allow Governors to assess its implementation and effectiveness.

This policy will be actively promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.