



Insights Independent School

# Complaints Policy

Policy agreed by Executive Director and the Directors of School:  
November 2024

Next Review Date: November 2025

## Introduction

Insights Independent School is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students and their families. We understand that concerns or complaints may arise from time to time, and we are dedicated to addressing them promptly and fairly.

## Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders, including parents, carers, guardians, students, and external professionals interacting with the school. It covers concerns and complaints related to the quality of education, pastoral support, school environment, or any aspect of the school's provision.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for raising, addressing, and resolving complaints within Insights Independent school. It aims to ensure that all concerns and complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly, and transparently while maintaining a focus on resolution.

## Principles

Insights Independent School adheres to the following principles when handling complaints:

- **Fairness:** All complaints will be treated impartially and objectively.
- **Confidentiality:** Information will be kept confidential, to the extent permitted by law.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints will be dealt with promptly, within specified timescales that will be communicated unless extenuating circumstances arise.
- **Respect:** All parties involved will be treated with respect and courtesy.
- **Resolution:** We encourage informal resolution wherever possible, complaints will be addressed fairly and honestly through dialogue and mutual understanding.
- We comply with legal and regulatory requirements, including Department for Education (DfE) guidelines.

*In all cases we put the interest of the child/young person above all else. We provide opportunities for any complaints to be fully discussed, investigated and then resolved.*

## Process Overview

### Who will deal with your complaint

- At the informal stage your complaint should be raised with the form tutor (if appropriate), a Director of School for the school site.
- If the complaint does not relate to a teacher in the school, but to a member of the non-teaching staff, it should be referred to the Deputy Executive Director or Executive Director.
- If you proceed to the formal part of the process the Executive Director will assume responsibility for the process unless the Executive Director is the subject of the complaint, in which case the Chair of the Advisory board will assume responsibility. The Chair will make a decision as to whether it is appropriate to conduct a preliminary investigation or whether it is necessary to establish a Complaints panel to resolve the matter.
- Where the complainant is a member of the Advisory Board, to ensure impartiality, the Board member will play no part in the management or appeal of the complaint as set out in this policy.

## Complaints Procedure

**Objective:** To resolve concerns quickly and amicably

### **Stage 1: Informal Resolution (Informal Timeline: Within 5 working days)**

If a parent/carer or student is concerned about anything to do with the education we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the Form Tutor or Site Lead. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. It is the role of form tutors and school staff to ensure that each student is happy at school and is making good progress. The organisation's staff, especially those working directly with children and young people would always want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before it seriously affects the student's progress.

Where a parent/carer or student feels that a situation has not been resolved by raising the concern directly with the relevant staff member (e.g., teacher, therapist), the concern should be escalated by contacting the form tutor or Site Lead. If the concern is of a serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Director of School.

Parents/carers can further discuss the nature of the complaint and how it has been handled so far with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will investigate each case thoroughly and most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

The school responds verbally or in writing within **5 school days**.

### **Stage 2: Formal Complaint (Formal Timeline: Within 20 working days)**

**Objective:** To address unresolved concerns through a structured approach.

Every effort will be made by all parties to resolve complaints in a timely manner. The entire procedure should a complaint proceed to the appeal Stage, should be dealt with within 40 school days, where possible.

Sometimes it will not be possible for you to have your complaint resolved through the informal process as proposed above, or due to the nature of the concern it might be more appropriate to initiate formal procedures. In this case, the complainant should submit a written complaint using the school's official complaint form, available from the school office and can be downloaded from the school website. The school acknowledges receipt within 2 school days.

The complaint should detail the nature of the concern, any steps taken to resolve it informally, and the desired outcome. It should then be sent to [info@insightsesc.co.uk](mailto:info@insightsesc.co.uk) for the attention of the Executive Director. The Executive Director or designated senior leader will investigate the complaint. This may involve meetings with the complainant, staff, or students and reviewing relevant documentation.



A written response is provided within 10 school days of acknowledgment. If more time is required, the complainant is informed of the revised timeline.

Where a parent/carer feels that a formal complaint has not been resolved by raising the concern With the Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director the complaint should then be sent to [info@insightsesc.co.uk](mailto:info@insightsesc.co.uk) for the attention of the Chair of Advisory Board. A member of staff from the school Administration team, on behalf of the Chair will then acknowledge the complaint in writing and with the Chair of the Advisory Board schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within 20 working days.

The complaint will be assigned to the designated complaints person, who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days.

The designated complaint person will investigate the matter, including gathering relevant information and interviewing involved parties.

The designated complaint person will provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days, explaining the findings and any actions to be taken.

### Decisions and outcomes

Where the complaint is upheld we will acknowledge this and address the complaint you have raised. If after consideration it is judged that there are no grounds for your complaint you will be advised accordingly.

The complaints process is non-adversarial and does not provide a role for any other statutory or non-statutory body.

### The Complaints Panel

The Chair or the Executive Director will arrange a hearing before a panel. The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Executive Director and the Directors of School and should consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the Chair to include one person independent of the Directors of School, the Executive Director and the running of the school.

If the panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 working days prior to the hearing. The parents or carers may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person who maybe a relative or a friend. **Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.** If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

### Stage 3: Appeal (Appeal Timeline: Within 15 working days)

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response at Stage 2, they may request an appeal within 10 working days of receiving the response.

The appeal should be submitted in writing, specifying the reasons for the appeal.

An independent panel consisting of Insights Independent School representatives, a member of Advisory Board and an external representative if required, will review the complaint and the initial response.

Where an appeal is requested and a further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 working days of the hearing. The panel will write to the parents or carers informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing to the parents or carers, the Executive Director, members of the Advisory Board where appropriate and, where relevant, the person who was complained about.

The decision of the panel will be final, but should parents or carers still not be satisfied, they can complain directly to the Secretary of State who will look into whether the school handled the complaint properly. In the case of serious misconduct complaints will be referred immediately to the police.

Should any parents have a complaint about the Executive Director, they are welcome to have an informal meeting with the Executive Director. Where parents or carers are unhappy with the outcome or the complaint is very serious, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.

The panel will provide a written response within 15 working days, which will be the final decision of the school.

#### Malicious or vexatious complaints

Malicious or vexatious complaints indicate that the complaint may have been fabricated or made with the intention or the effect of causing annoyance or upset to the complainer.

The Advisory Board will take care when considering if the complaint of a parent/carer constituted malicious or vexatious behaviour. The Board will seek advice from the LA's DO in order to protect staff and pupils from the potential impact of such actions.

#### Record Keeping

Written records of complaints are kept securely onsite and the Complaints Log indicates whether they were resolved at the Informal Stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. The school's Administration Team logs all complaints received by the school and a written summary explains how they were resolved. The Advisory Board members examine this log on an annual basis. A record of all correspondence, conversations and meeting concerning your complaint will be kept and these records shall be held confidentially on site and kept apart from student records. All such records of complaints will be destroyed three years after the date of the last correspondence relating to the issue.

***All 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 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them***

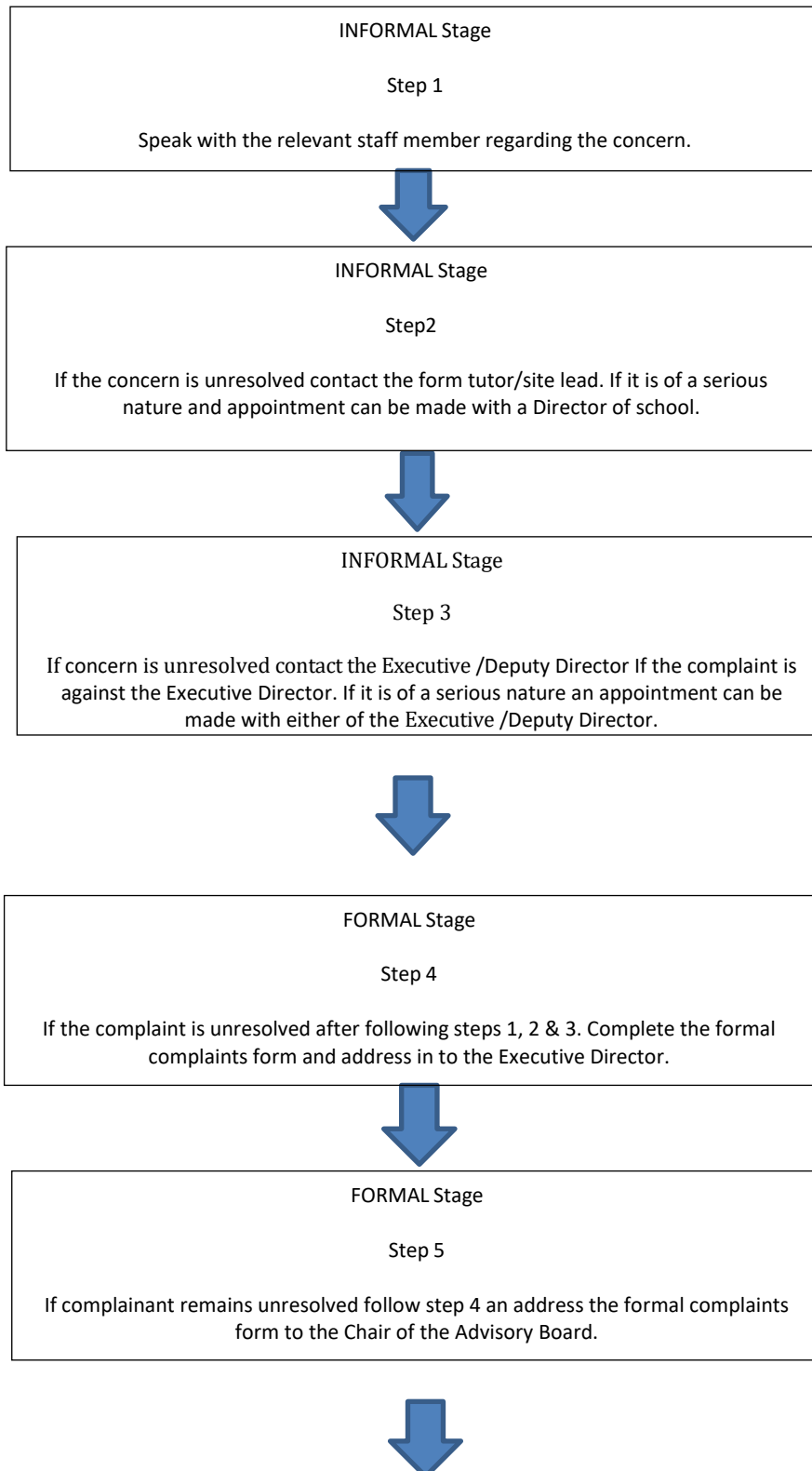
#### Monitoring and Review

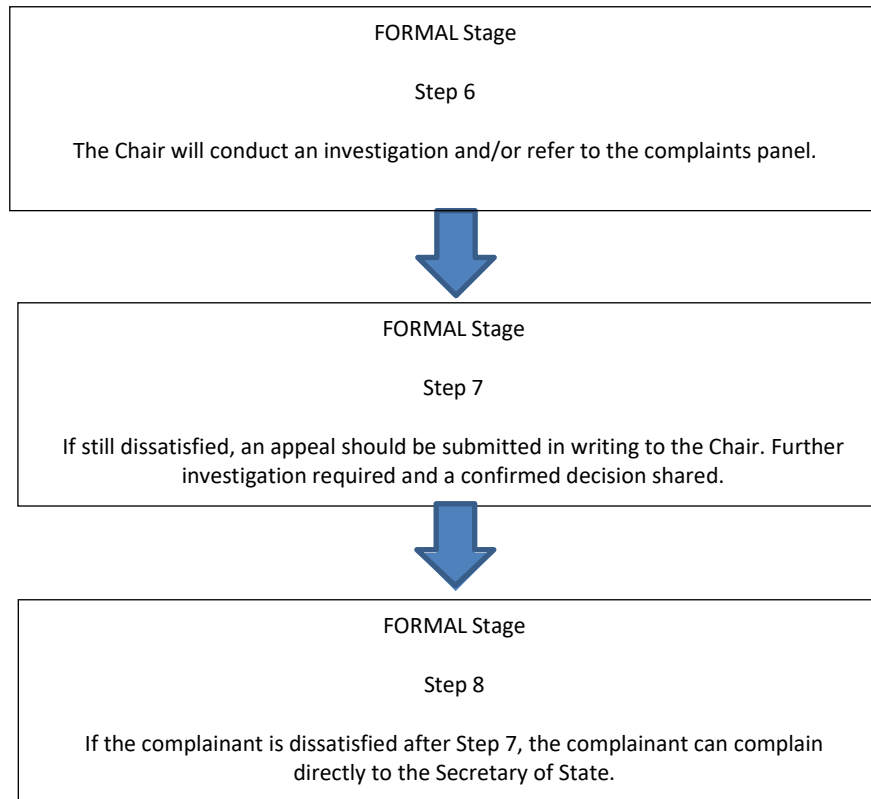
The Chair of the Advisory Board oversees the monitoring of the complaints procedure in order to ensure that your complaints are handled properly. The Advisory Board takes into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process and makes any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents and carers so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

Next review date: [November 2025](#)

## Appendix 1 - Flowchart: Complaints Process and Timescales

This flowchart provides a visual representation of the complaints process and the associated timelines at each stage, making it easier for stakeholders to understand the procedure and expectations for resolution.







## Appendix 2 – Parent/Carer Complaint Form

Your name:

Student's name:

Your relationship to the

student: Your address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Email (optional):

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Please give the details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (For example, who 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.*

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*Your*

*Signature:*

*Date:*

*For Insights' official use only:*

*Date acknowledgement sent to complainant: By who:*

*Position:*

*Name of person the complaint was referred to: Position:*

*Date complaint referred:*