



Complaints Policy

All parents or guardians who wish to discuss any aspect of their child's life with the teachers or the headmistress are most welcome to do so and we shall be happy to answer their queries. We do, however, request them to make an appointment in advance so that we may set aside adequate time for discussion.

The majority of issues raised by parents or guardians are concerns rather than complaints. Alexandra House 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 complaint, parents or guardians may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one term of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a term it will not be investigated.

The prime aim of Alexandra House School'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 school.

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

Stage 1 – A concern is raised informally with the teacher concerned.

- Parents or guardians should make an appointment to speak to the teacher about the concern as it is best to resolve issues at this point.
- If the concern raised requires investigation, or discussion with others, parents or guardians will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two and the vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way.

Stage 2 – The concern is heard by the headmistress.

- Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the result of the discussions with the teacher concerned should ask for an appointment.
- The aim of this meeting, which will normally take place within 10 days, will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.
- If parents or guardians are not satisfied with the result at stage 2 they should send a written complaint to the headmistress/director on the official form (available from the school secretary).

Stage 3 – A formal complaint is made in writing to the headmistress or director.

- An issue that has not been resolved through the informal levels 1 and 2 can become an official complaint.
- Parents or guardians wishing to move to level 3 must complete the official complaints form and send it to the headmistress or director.
- The letter or form will need to set out clearly the issues which have previously been discussed and why the parent or guardian considers the issue to be unresolved.
- The headmistress and/or director will then arrange for a further investigation which may involve further meetings with the teacher and parents or guardians and possibly other members of staff.
- Following the investigation, the headmistress or director will normally give a written response within 10 school working days.
- If parents or guardians are dissatisfied with the result at stage 3, they will need to let the school know within 10 school working days of getting the response.

Stage 4 – The complaint is heard by the Complaints Appeal Panel.

- If the matter has still not been resolved at stage 3, then the parents or guardians will need to write to the school to ask them to convene a Complaints Panel which will include the headmistress, director, teacher/s and members of the board of governors.
- The hearing will normally take place within 10 school working days of the receipt of the written request for stage 4 investigation.
- The aim of the appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant.
- All parties will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 10 working days after the date of the hearing.
- The decision of the Complaints Appeal Panel will be final.

Alexandra House School – Complaint form

Please complete and return to the headmistress or director who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:	
Pupil's name:	
Your relationship to the pupil:	
Address:	
Day time telephone number:	
Please give 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 the response)?	
What action do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signature:	Date:
<i>Official Use</i>	
Date acknowledgement sent:	By whom:
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	