

Complaints Policy

Our mission at THE BRIDGE SCHOOL is to ensure our services are delivered to the satisfaction of our students, if you are not satisfied with a particular area of service delivery (courses or any other thing) please inform us. We believe that any issue is best resolved amicably, informally between yourself and your child's teacher or the school Administrator.

- We aim to resolve complaints within five working days – However, more serious complaints can take longer to resolve.
- If a complaint is to be made to the Academic Manager, this should be put in writing.
- Any complaint received will be dealt with in a fair, un-biased and professional manner.

Scope of Complaints Policy

The Director sets the direction and tone of the school in all that they do and are committed to working with parents in the best interests of their children's education. The purpose of the Complaints Policy is to address complaints raised by parents/guardians.

- The procedure covers all matters relating to the actions of staff employed in the school and the application of school procedures, where they affect individual students. However, schools need to be clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest possible stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints.
- The school will not deal with anonymous complaints (except for those concerning child protection matters) and therefore these procedures do not provide for a resolution of anonymous complaints. To allow for proper investigation, complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. If a complaint is brought to the attention of an individual member of management, she/he should make sure that the complaint is dealt with under the correct complaints procedure adopted by the school.

Complaints Procedure

To enable us to deal effectively with any issues we would need details of the complaint. If you have a complaint, please do the following:

For complaints on student's welfare or quality of any aspect of the school's provision:

- a) At the informal stage please speak to either the teacher directly or to the School Administrator; you can contact them at admin@thebridge-school.co.uk – If you contact the administrator this way, please be sure to give your full name and the nature of your complaint. You should receive a response within 24 hours if complaining via email; if complaining in person, you should receive a response immediately.
- b) Where no satisfactory solution has been found, the complainant should be informed that s/he will need to consider whether to make a formal complaint in writing to the Academic Manager.

To assist in this process a complaint form should be provided (see Annexe 1). You will need to make an appointment to do this or you can contact them at academicmanager@thebridge-school.co.uk – If you contact the manager this way, please be sure to give your full name and the nature of your complaint. If necessary, the academic manager will interview those involved. You should receive a written response within 24 hours. If the problem is not resolved at that point, you will be kept advised about how the procedure is going. The academic manager should keep reasonable written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation. Once all the relevant facts have been established, the academic manager will produce a written response to the complainant. The academic manager may wish to meet the complainant to discuss/resolve the matter before confirming the outcome in writing. The written response should include a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, it should include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint.

- c) Where no satisfactory solution has been found, the complainant can escalate their complaint by requesting a hearing in front of a panel.

If you wish to take your complaint to a panel, this will need to be covered in writing and addressed to the Director of the school. A panel will be convened at the earliest opportunity but at least seven working days should be allowed for a date to be settled. The panel will appear on behalf of the school and will consist, ideally, of the director, a parent of a student attending the school, the school solicitor, none of whom are related directly to the problem. In the circumstances where any or all of these are unavailable, an alternative panel will be created of at least three people not directly involved with the original complaint. At least one panel member must not be directly involved with the management or the running of the school. Another parent of a student at the school can be present at the hearing if they so desire. The panel hearing date will be arranged for a time that is suitable and convenient for the complainant and will be held at an agreed location. All previous evidence provided to any member of staff related to the complaint can be produced as evidence for consideration during the hearing. The panel will investigate and make recommendations about how to resolve the complaint or how such matters can be dealt with in the future. A record of all proceedings taken by the panel and can be made available for the director to view if she is not present at the hearing and the academic manager. A record must be taken of all action taken by the school, whether or not the school decides to take action to respond positively to the complaint. Within five working days of the hearing you should receive a written decision from the panel.

- d) If you are not satisfied with the findings of the panel, then you are advised to make a written formal complaint about the school to the local authority of Southwark:

Southwark Council,
PO Box 64529
London,
SE1P 5LX

The local authority may request all previous evidence relating to the complaint and may contact the school to provide further evidence or witness statements regarding the complaint.

e) The complaint can be referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) if the complaint is still not satisfactorily resolved. The LGO will issue an adjudication which is binding on the school to accept.

The LGO Advice Team can be contacted for information and advice, or to register a complaint:

LGO Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

f) If the matter has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, please contact Ofsted's online complaints department to make a formal complaint about the school:

<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints>

Record Keeping

The Bridge SEN School shall maintain a record of all correspondence, conversations and meetings concerning any complaint. These records shall be held confidentially in the school and shall be kept apart from pupil records unless the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

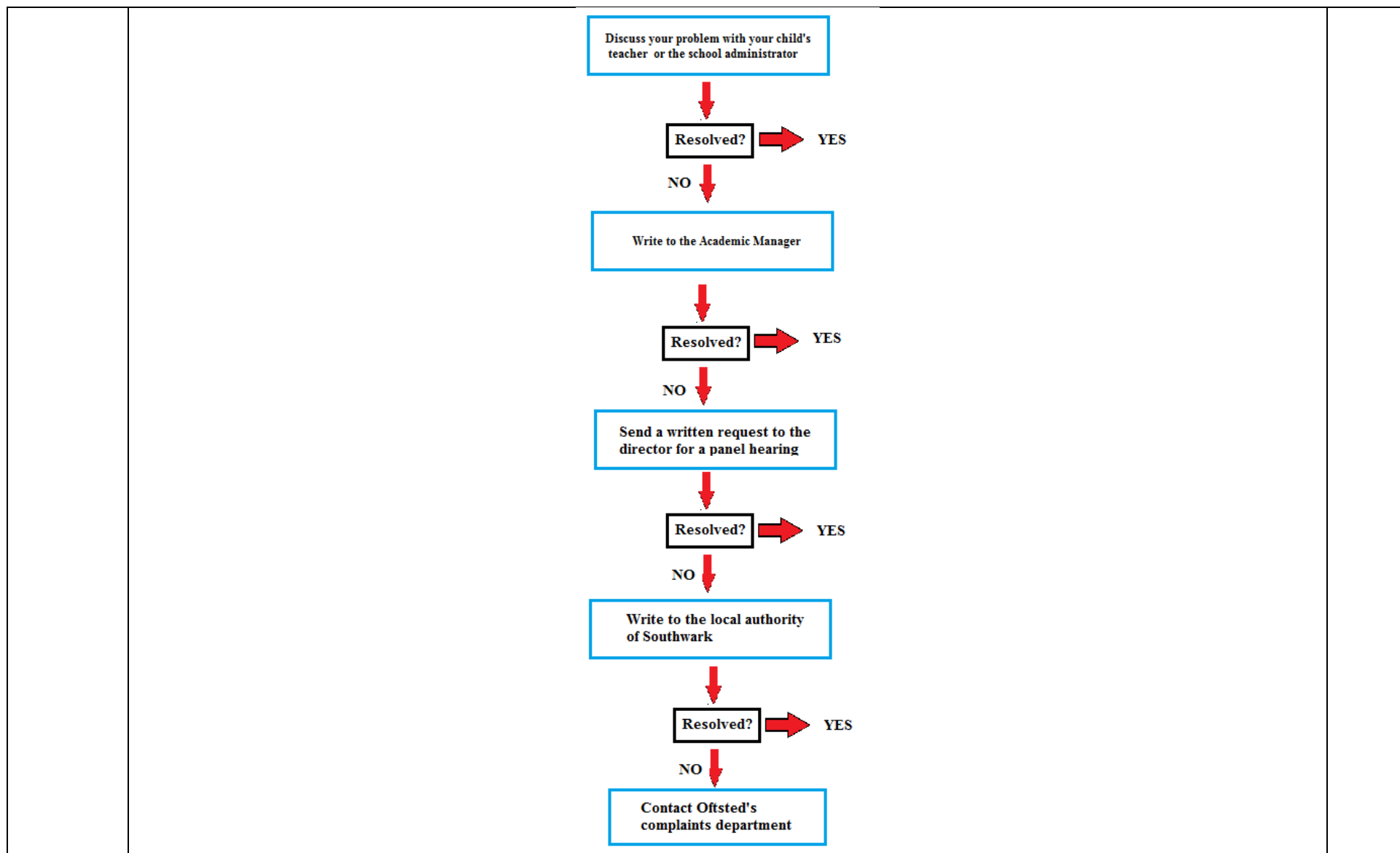
All such records will be destroyed three years after the date of the last correspondence on the issue.

A record of all action taken by the school whether or not the school decides to take action to respond to the complaint.

Malicious complaints

Where a panel arranged by the school considers the actions of a parent/group of parents to constitute frivolous or vexatious behaviour, they may seek advice from the relevant Employing Authority in order to protect staff from further such actions.

	This policy is renewed annually or whenever required. It is the responsibility of the academic manager to renew the policy.	
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	Last updated: December 2023	Next update December 2024

Appendix 1



School Complaint Form

If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve your complaint and wish to take the matter further, please complete this form and send it to the Academic Manager. {If your complaint is against the Academic Manager you will need to send the form to the Director.

Name:

Telephone Number (Mobile):

Address:

Name of Child:

Telephone Number (Home):

Date of Birth of Child:

What is your complaint about and what would you like the school to do?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

When did you discuss your concern/complaint with the appropriate member of staff?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

What was the result of the discussion?

Continue on a separate sheet as necessary

Signed:

Date: