



**The Banda School**

# **COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE**



The Banda School aims to provide a high-quality service, welcomes suggestions from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may arise. Many concerns that pupils and parents have do not necessarily call for complaint, but should still be brought to the School's attention. Help can only be given about issues that are known.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, which needs a response and it is our aim to respond in a timely manner. It may take longer to resolve a complaint during a holiday period, during periods of significant disruption to school life, or in the case of staff absence. Nevertheless, the School will do what is reasonably practicable to avoid undue delay.

The Banda will endeavour to deal with complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way and, where appropriate, will take action. It is our desire that complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally, but in a sensitive and fair manner. It is the School's policy that complaints should not rebound on the children.

This policy applies to all parents of current registered pupils (or those with parental responsibility).

## **Complaints Procedure for Parents**

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- 1) Wherever possible, it is best to raise the issue face to face with the person most closely concerned with the grievance(s). Please make an appointment with him/her in order to allow for a suitable period of time to be available to discuss it fully. This will hopefully mean the matter is resolved quickly, to mutual satisfaction and informally. If a meeting is not possible, then the complaint should be made by email, telephone or in a letter. The individual receiving the complaint will make a record of important concerns and complaints, and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or, in the event that the individual and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.
- 2) You may ask for a meeting with your child's Form Tutor/Class Teacher, the relevant Head of Department or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to raise your concern. The Form Tutor/Class Teacher, Head of Department or member of the SLT will meet or speak with the parents concerned as soon as possible, but at least within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. This will allow time to consult others if necessary. It is hoped that the issue will be resolved quickly and informally to both parties' satisfaction. However, it may be necessary for further investigations.
- 3) Complaints made directly to the Head will be referred to the appropriate member of staff, unless deemed appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- 4) If we do not hear from you within 28 days of the School's response to a Stage 1 complaint, we will treat the matter as resolved.

## Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- 1) You may ask for a meeting with a senior member of staff or the Head to raise your concern and the complaint must be put in writing. This should take place within 28 days of the School's response to the initial complaint and should refer in writing to a 'formal complaint.' You may escalate a complaint to Stage 2 if both the parent and member of staff dealing with the Stage 1 complaint are unable to resolve a situation.
- 2) The senior member of staff or Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. Ideally, they will meet in person. It is hoped that the issue will be resolved quickly and informally to both parties' satisfaction. It may be necessary for further investigations and written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- 3) Once all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision or course of action will be made and parents will be informed of this decision/course of action in writing, giving reasons for the decision.
- 4) If the complaint is against the Head, the complaint should be made directly to the Chair of Governors. In this case, the Chair of Governors may appoint someone to conduct an initial investigation on his/her behalf at Stage 2. If parents are not satisfied with the outcome then they may invoke Stage 3.
- 5) The Head will endeavour to:
  - a) Acknowledge your complaint in writing within five working days.
  - b) Inform you how the matter will be dealt with and how matters will proceed.
  - c) Send an email or letter to explain the conclusion to you, along with reasons for it and any action being taken.

If parents are still not satisfied, they should proceed to Stage 3 of the Procedure.

Your complaint or concern will, as far as possible, remain confidential and all information treated with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Head and those directly involved.

### Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- 1) If parents proceed to Stage 3 of the Procedure, they are to write to the Head informing them of their decision to do so, within 28 working days. The matter will be referred to the Chairman of The Banda School, following a failure to reach an earlier resolution. The Chairman may choose to resolve the complaint himself or he may appoint a named Governor to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- 2) The Chairman will ask for a full report from the Head and will examine all of the facts thoroughly before responding. Failure to reach a resolution at this stage means that the Chairman will consider the matter using and appointing a panel of three persons not directly involved in the complaint – one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. The panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a meeting to take place, normally within 14 working days. Further particulars of the complaint may be called upon and these should be supplied to all parties five working days before the hearing.
- 3) Parents may choose one other person to accompany them to the meeting. This may be a relative, teacher or a friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 4) If possible, the matter will be resolved immediately, without the need for further investigation. However, should the panel decide at the hearing that further investigation is required, the panel will decide how such investigations should be carried out and by when they should be concluded. Such investigations will take place within ten working days.
- 5) The panel will then reconvene and after due consideration of all of the facts, reach a decision and they may make recommendations. This procedure should be completed within ten working days of the hearing.
- 6) The panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the panel will be final. The panel's findings and recommendations, if relevant, will be sent in writing to the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about. Such documentation will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chairman and the Head.

## Recording Complaints

We will aim to keep all records of complaints confidential, but cannot rule out the possibility of the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly the identities of those involved. The record of complaints will indicate whether they were resolved at the Formal Stage (Stage 2) or at a Panel Hearing (Stage 3) and the action taken by the school as a result of the complaints. This is only likely to be necessary where

- a child's safety is involved
- inspectors conduct an inspection and wish to check records
- legal obligations require access to records

The School will keep records of all complaints made, including all formal written complaints, where they are resolved at Stage 2 or Stage 3 of this Procedure. The record will include any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint. The record will also include details of Stage 1 complaints, where those complaints are handled by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These will be recorded on CPOMS, allowing threads to be monitored.

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. A record of such complaints will be kept and will be available on request (for example, by an inspecting body). If parents believe Pegasus Early Years is not meeting the EYFS requirements, during an inspection, they may contact the inspecting body directly.

The record of complaints will be kept for at least three years.

## Further Information

Whilst information relating to specific complaints will be kept on file, we may not pursue anonymous complaints.

Action, which needs to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints, will be handled confidentially within school.

The Department for Education in England have given guidance on suitable people for an independent panel member as follows:

'Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background.'

**Parents should be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to**

**individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by the local laws of Kenya.**

We hope that you feel satisfied with the outcome and feel that your concerns have been taken seriously.