



Complaints Procedure

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Parneet Kang'.

Parneet Kang
Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'William Holland'.

William Holland
Chair of Trustees

REVIWED: 1st September 2022 - Parneet Kang

The Emscote school, aims to provide a high-quality educational experience for every student, which not only provides good teaching, leading to good examination results and good outcomes, but also a well-rounded educational experience with emphasis on improving students' academic and personal development.

We also recognise that, occasionally things can go wrong and parents or members of the public may need to make a complaint or raise concerns. All complaints received will be recorded formally by the appropriate person within the school.

The Principal, who is also the proprietor of the school will ensure that the complaints procedures is located on the school website and a copy of the complaints procedure is available from the school office on request. The Principal and Chair of the Board of Trustees will ensure that the complaints policy is implemented effectively

It should be noted that the school does not normally consider complaints made more than one year after the incident or situation causing concern occurred.

If a complaint is made about an issue that is over a year old the school will write to the complainant explaining the school's procedure.

Stage One: The First Contact: Guidelines for dealing with concerns and complaints informally.

There is an expectation that every effort will have been made to resolve a concern/complaint informally before escalation to Stage 2 is considered.

If anyone has a concern/complaint it may be registered either verbally or in writing. If the member of staff first contacted cannot immediately deal with the matter, they will make a clear note of the date, name, contact address, phone number and brief details of the concern/complaint. It is good practice to agree the written note of the complaint with the complainant and get the note signed and dated.

This information will be passed to the Principal at the earliest opportunity.

An opportunity will be given to the complainant to discuss the concern/complaint with an appropriate member of staff, who will clarify the nature of the concern/complaint and the outcome required. This is to avoid unnecessary confusion, and continuity for the compliant.

The "Complaints Co-ordinator" will identify the appropriate procedure and conduct the investigation. The Co-ordinator will communicate verbally with the complainant to ensure they are clear about what action or monitoring of the situation has been decided on, only putting this in writing if this seems the best way to make things clear.

The school aims to handle informal complaints with 5 working days.

Stage Two: Formal Referral to the Principal

If the complaint is about the Principal, or the Principal, has been so involved as not to be impartial, the complaint must be put in writing and addressed to the Vice Principal, and sent to the school address.

Otherwise:

The complaint should be submitted in writing to the Principal, (A complaint form is to be used to log the complaint – copy in **Appendix One**).

Where the Principal, has acted as Complaint Co-ordinator at Stage One, another senior member of staff will be designated to collect the required information from the parties involved. This person may be nominated to be the investigator.

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing within **five school days**, giving the name of the person who will conduct the investigation and a target date for providing a response, usually within **10 school working days**.

The investigator may ask the complainant to meet with them to give extra information or to explain any information provided previously.

Once all the relevant facts have been established, the Principal, or her designate, will provide a written response.

The written response will include:

- a full explanation of the decision reached and the reasons for it
- where applicable, what action the school will take to address the complaint and prevent recurrence
- information on next steps to be followed and the timescale to request a review by the Chair of the Trustees, if not satisfied with the outcome

Stage 3: (Formal Stage involving the Chair of the Trustees)

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to a complaint at stages 1 or 2 then the complaint will move to stage 3.

A request to review a complaint investigation should be made in writing to the Chair of Trustees within 20 school days of the date of the outcome letter from the first stage process and should give the reasons for requesting a review.

For example:

- a claim that material information was not taken into account in investigating the complaint
- a claim that procedures have not been properly applied in handling the complaint
- a claim that there has been an incorrect interpretation of school policy.

As much detail as possible should be provided. If insufficient detail is given this may result in a delay, or a request being made for further clarification.

A formal procedure for dealing with the complaint will be adopted. A panel will be appointed by the Principal, who is also the proprietor, to deal with the complaint at Stage 3. A panel hearing will be conducted.

The panel will consist of at least three members to review the complaint and any further documents submitted by the complainant. The members will have had no prior involvement with the complaint. One panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school. The complaint panel will review the complaint and any further documents submitted by the complainant.

The clerk will convene the complaints panel hearing within 20 school days of receipt of the review request and at the same time provide panel members with copies of all relevant correspondence and documentation.

The panel can set time limits for both sides to present their case and for the length of the hearing overall. These will be communicated to everyone involved by the clerk.

The complainant, the Principal, and other witnesses will be given a minimum of **5 school days'** notice of the hearing. The complainant will be advised of their right to bring a friend, or to be represented by someone of their choice.

The outcome of a review may include:

- upholding the result of the original investigation
- upholding the result of the original investigation but making recommendations for improving practices
- finding the complaint was justified and overturning the original decision.

The Chair of the panel will notify the complainant in writing of the outcome of the review and of any action to be taken, within 7 school days after concluding the review:

- a copy of the findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about;
- the findings and recommendations of the panel will be available for inspection on school premises by the Principal, who is also the proprietor.

The Chair will ensure that any required action is put in place.

The school will:

- maintain a written record of all complaints made, along with details of whether they were resolved following a formal procedure, or progression to a panel hearing;
- ensure the school will record the action it takes as a result of complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld);
- ensure correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.
- keep records of complaints for 5 years securely, whether they were resolved or not or what stage they were at. The written record will include any action

taken by the school as a result of the complaint regardless of whether they are upheld.

Further Action:

The decision of the trustees is final. The trustee will not consider any subsequent complaint that is materially the same as a complaint that has already been considered at stage 3, nor will it enter into any further correspondence with a complaint in these circumstances save to bring to their attention the right to complain to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or Ofsted who will consider the complaint according to their own procedures.

The school has a vexatious complaints policy that should be read alongside this complaints policy. A copy of the vexatious complaints policy is located on the school's website and a papercopy copy is available from the school office.

Appendix 1

Title		
First Name		
Surname		
Address		
Telephone	(Day)	Evening
<i>(If a complaint relates to the pupil, please give:)</i>		
Pupils Name		
Relationship to the pupil		
Please give details of your complaint:		
What actions, if any, have you taken to try and resolve your complaint? <i>(Who did you speak to and what was their response?)</i>		
What would you like us to do to make improvements or put things right?		
Are you attaching any paperwork? <i>(If so, please write details below;)</i>		
Signature		
Date		