

# COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

Reviewed: Aug 2023 | Next review: Aug 2024



## 1. General

- 1.1. The complaints procedure is open to all parents of current pupils at Jamea al Kauthar to raise a concern or complaint about any provision of facilities or services provided. The policy complies with Standard 14 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and Part 7 of the Independent School Standards.
- 1.2. This policy does not cover the following cases:
  - Parents of prospective pupils including admissions-related matters.
  - Complaints from parents of pupils who have voluntarily left the school or as a result of being excluded (except in cases where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at Jamea al Kauthar). For exclusions, the school's Appeal Against Exclusion procedure must be followed.
  - Complaints from current pupils and staff: there are separate policies for this.
  - Complaints received anonymously (unless a child protection concern is raised).
- 1.3. Written records of all the complaints will be kept for regular review by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) indicating whether complaints were resolved at the preliminary stage, or preceded to the panel hearing. The action taken by the school as a result of complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) will also be recorded.
- 1.4. 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 under the 2008 Act requests access to them, or where the school is otherwise required by law to disclose them.
- 1.5. Parents of current pupils have the right to know the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year. This information is available upon request from the School Administrator.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1. To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for parents wishing to make a complaint.
- 2.2. To ensure all procedures are in accordance with statutory legislation and Islamic ethos.
- 2.3. To ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- 2.4. To ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- 2.5. To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.
- 2.6. To support the mission, vision and values of Jamea al Kauthar.

## 3. Stage one – informal resolution

- 3.1. Jamea al Kauthar expects that before seeking to use formal procedures, the complainant:
  - will have raised the issue with a member of staff within the school; and
  - will have made reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution (including asking for a meeting at the school).
- 3.2. Where a minor problem arises at source, or where a minor complaint is made directly and verbally, this should be dealt with at source with explanation and mediation being the key forms of resolution.
- 3.3. Informal complaints will be addressed within five school days of receipt of the complaint.

## 4. Stage two – formal resolution

- 4.1. The Principal will exercise reasonable discretion not to allow a written complaint to be pursued where an Informal Resolution has not been sought.

- 4.2. The complainant must put the complaint in writing unless the complainant has a disability which prevents this, in which case the complainant may contact the school for assistance. The complaint should be addressed to the Principal.
- 4.3. Complaints submitted in electronic form must be sent from an authorised email address which the school has on record for the complainant.
- 4.4. The Principal will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing, and pass the complaint to a nominated Senior Leader as appropriate for investigation.
- 4.5. The investigation should aim to be concluded and communicated to the complainant within 20 school days of the complaint being received. The Principal or the nominated Senior Leader will discuss the findings of the investigation with the complainant. This may be during a meeting or over the telephone.
- 4.6. An extension of this deadline should only be considered where there is a genuine delay in the availability of information required to consider the investigation and clear attempts to obtain the information in a timely manner can be demonstrated. If an extension to the investigation is required, this should be communicated along with the revised deadline, in writing, to the complainant.
- 4.7. The Principal will then record their findings in writing and indicate what steps, if any, should be taken in order to resolve the matter. Whenever reasonably possible, this will be done within 10 school days of the discussion with the complainant at paragraph 4.6 above.
- 4.8. A copy of the complaint and the written response will be kept by the school.
- 4.9. Where a complaint relates directly to the Principal, a member of the Governing Body will take over this role. Otherwise, the procedure for the Stage Two will remain the same.

## **5. Stage three – panel hearing**

- 5.1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the first and second stage, the complainant may request that the complaint be considered by the Complaint Appeals Panel which will be appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor. The panel will consist of at least three people who have not previously been involved in the complaint, of which one person will be independent of the management and running of the school.
- 5.2. A request to use the third stage must be in writing, addressed to the Principal within 10 school days of the Stage Two response being sent to the complainant and must set out clearly the reasons why the complainant is dissatisfied with the response.
- 5.3. The school will organise a hearing of the Complaint Appeals Panel. That hearing will be held as quickly as practicable given the need to find a date that is reasonably convenient for the complainant, the school and the members of the Panel. Whenever possible, the hearing will be held within 20 school days of the appeal request being received by the school or as soon after this as is practicable.
- 5.4. The following are entitled to attend the Panel hearing:
  - the complainant/s and/or one representative; and
  - the Principal and/or one representative.
- 5.5. The Panel will formulate its response as quickly as reasonably possible, aiming to do so within 10 school days, and the School Administrator will notify all concerned.
- 5.6. The Panel findings and recommendations will be:
  - sent in writing to the complainant;
  - sent, where relevant, to the person complained about; and
  - available for inspection on Jamea al Kauthar's premises.
- 5.7. If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised of their right to complain about the decision to: Department for Education, Store St., Manchester, M1 2WD.