

Meadows School

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Complaints Procedure

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1. Introduction:

Meadows School is committed to Barnardo's Basis and Values, which provides the framework within which we can engage in giving young people a better start in life.

- We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils.
- We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.
- We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.
- We understand that as a Special School we are working with some of the most vulnerable young people in the UK and therefore have a duty to ensure stringent procedures and training must be in place and available to all staff.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of the Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB).

2. Aims:	<p>The school aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address all points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response. • Make lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate decisions. • Promote the participation of children, young people, and their families. • Safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults by providing a process for them to raise concerns about the service they are receiving • Resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. • Keep this policy public and accessible. <p>Meadows School agree with Barnardo's Complaints & Representations Policy to develop a culture which encourages young people to make their views known and which responds positively to their concerns and complaints, however difficult and painful this may be at times. We must have a culture, which enables both staff and Barnardo's to learn from complaints to improve practice and policy. Complaints should be seen as a positive, not a negative force within Barnardo's.</p> <p>Attempts at problem solving will not be used by staff to divert an eligible person from lodging a complaint under the statutory procedure.</p>
3. Definitions:	<p>The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concern is defined as "an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought" • A complaint is defined as "an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action".

4. Roles and Responsibilities:	<p>The complainant should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise their complaint first on an informal level, before raising a formal complaint through Barnardo's. • Co-operate with the school throughout the process and respond to deadlines and communication promptly. • Ask for assistance as needed and treat all those involved with respect. • Not publish details about the complaint on social media. <p>All staff at Meadows School are responsible for resolving informal complaints raised to them by students, parents or carers or reporting the complaint to someone who is equipped to resolve it. Any complaints received from parents or carers should be recorded in the communication log of the student on Arbor.</p> <p>Line Managers and Senior Leaders are responsible for resolving informal complaints raised by those who they are managing.</p> <p>Meadows School has a responsibility to ensure all staff, students, parents/carers are aware of the complaints procedure and have access to Barnardo's complaints/grievance policies. Upon admission, Meadows School must provide all students with the Barnardo's Voice of the Child contact.</p>
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<p>5. Stages of Complaint (Students):</p>	<p>Informal Complaint</p> <p>Students are expected to raise any concerns immediately to their Linkworker or Tutor. Further to this, any informal complaints should be communicated verbally and will be taken seriously. The Linkworker/Tutor will establish the facts and resolve the complaint promptly.</p> <p>If the student feels their complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timeframe, they should raise the complaint verbally with their Head of Keystage. The Head of Keystage will communicate with the student's Linkworker/ Tutor to investigate which steps have already been taken and make their own effort to resolve the complaint</p> <p>If the student still feels their complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timeframe, they should raise the complaint verbally to the Head of Education or Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Head of Education/DSL will communicate with the student's Head of Keystage to investigate which steps have already been taken and make their own effort to resolve the complaint</p> <p>If the complaint is not resolved informally, it will be escalated to Barnardo's as a formal complaint.</p> <p>Formal Complaint</p> <p>Students should raise a formal complaint ONLY if they have gone through all of the necessary steps in the informal complaint process. Students are to inform their link worker that they have done this. Tina Douglass is the Barnardo's contact for students to raise a formal complaint.</p> <p>Tina Douglas – Voice of the Child Barnardo's South East Regional Office Unit 1, Satellite Business Village Fleming Way Crawley West Sussex tina.douglas@barnardos.org.uk 01293 610660</p>
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6.	Stages of Complaint (Parents/Carers):	<p>Informal Complaint</p> <p>Parents/Carers are expected to raise any concerns, by phone or email, immediately to their child's Linkworker or Tutor. Further to this, any informal complaints should be communicated by phone or email and will be taken seriously. The Linkworker or Tutor will establish the facts and resolve the complaint promptly. The Linkworker or Tutor may request assistance from the Head of Keystage or Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the parent/carer feels that the complaint has not been resolved in a reasonable timeframe they can inform the school that they would like to use the Barnardo's Complaints Procedure.</p> <p>Formal Complaint</p> <p>Parents can request the Barnardo's leaflets from Meadows School Admin team. Or contact: cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk 020 8550 8822</p>
7.	Stages of Complaint (Staff):	<p>Informal Complaint</p> <p>Employees and workers are expected to try to resolve problems informally in the first instance by discussion with their supervisor or line manager. If the grievance is against the manager of the employee or worker, then the problem should be raised with that person's manager who will seek to resolve the matter informally, as appropriate. The employee/worker should state their concern and how he/she would like the concern resolved.</p> <p>The manager should arrange to meet the employee/worker as soon as is reasonably practicable to establish why they are dissatisfied and look for a solution to the problem. The aims of the discussion should be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that the employee/worker is given a full opportunity to explain their grievance informally; • seek a means of resolving the problem; • consider mediation to try to resolve the problem if both parties agree. <p>An employee or worker complaining of harassment has the following options to assist them to resolve the issue informally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak or write to the person who is the subject of the alleged harassment personally • Ask their line manager or an appropriate impartial manager to try to set up mediation <p>Formal Complaint</p> <p>Staff are to refer to the Barnardo's Grievance Resolution Policy or Whistleblowing policy.</p>

8. Additional Information	
Copies of this policy may be obtained from:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Point • www.meadowsschool.org.uk
This policy links with the following policies & Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnardo's Complaints and Representations Policy • Barnardo's Grievance Resolution Policy • Barnardo's Whistleblowing Policy
Relevant statutory guidance, circulars, legislation & other sources of information are:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/sen-complaints (For Parent/Carer use)
The lead member of staff is:	Principal
Contacts named in this policy:	<p>Tina Douglas – Voice of the Child Barnardo's South East Regional Office Unit 1, Satellite Business Village Fleming Way Crawley West Sussex tina.douglas@barnardos.org.uk 01293 610660</p> <p>Barnardo's CS Complaints cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk 020 8550 8822</p>