



# Queen Elizabeth High School Policy

## Compliments and Complaints Policy

Effective Date: September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

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Policy and Document Links:

Dealing With Allegations Against Staff Policy  
Keeping Children Safe in Education  
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Staff Discipline and Grievance Procedures

Policy Type: Statutory

Publication: Website

Amendments: See Policy Amendment Record

(1) 19.03.17

(2) 18.05.17

## **Rationale**

Queen Elizabeth High School is committed to valuing all compliments, concerns and complaints as contributions to its process of continual school improvement. It takes all complaints seriously and seeks to resolve them as swiftly as possible.

## **Aim**

The aim of this document is to enable parents/carers and members of the wider community to register compliments with respect to the school and/or its staff and students or to raise any issues they might have. It sets out the procedures for raising concerns or making a complaint and the ways in which the school will respond.

## **Procedures**

Any person wishing to express a compliment, raise a concern or make a complaint should contact the school in one of the following ways:

- Compliments can be sent to the school by any convenient means e.g. telephone, letter, in person or by e-mail ([admin@queenelizabeth.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@queenelizabeth.hereford.sch.uk)). The school will keep all compliments on file. The school appreciates compliments made about the school itself, members of staff, governors and students. In most instances, compliments will be suitably acknowledged.
- Concerns can be raised with the school by any convenient means. If the matter regards your child's welfare you might want to contact the Key Stage Leader or Form Tutor in the first instance. If it is regarding your child's attainment and progress then you might want to contact the appropriate Subject Leader or the Deputy Headteacher. These key staff members will be able to liaise with your child's Form Tutor and Subject Tutors on your behalf. Your concerns will be acknowledged within 2 working days by telephone, email or letter by the person to which the concern has been directed. If the matter has not been resolved within this time, this response will indicate the next steps and timescales, and the name of the key staff member dealing with it. If a meeting is necessary then a mutually convenient time will be arranged as soon as possible.

Queen Elizabeth High School is committed to responding accurately and promptly to all comments and complaints and respecting the concerns of all members of the school and wider community.

## **Informal Complaints**

Often school staff and leaders may receive complaints which although warrant investigation are not formal in their nature. For example, this could be a telephone call from a parent objecting to the setting of a detention or some other similar issue.

Leaders will address these complaints in a professional manner and seek to resolve any issues presented. Where it is clear that redress offered through this medium is not appropriate then the complainant will be advised that there is a formal procedure which can be followed. This is only ever triggered by the completion of a complaint form as per this policy.

## **Formal Complaints**

### **Stage 1**

A letter or email outlining the details of the complaint should be sent to the Headteacher using the **Complaints Form** (See Appendix 1). This will be acknowledged within 2 working days by letter. The acknowledgement will include an explanation of what will happen next, timescales and the name of the key staff member dealing with the complaint. This will usually be the Complaints Coordinator, who, unless the complaint concerns them specifically will be the Deputy Headteacher. Should the complaint concern the Headteacher directly then please move straight to step 2. It is the responsibility of the Complaints Co-ordinator to consider the allegation and report on the findings without prejudice so that the Headteacher or governors in the case of the complaint being about the Headteacher can decide whether to move to a formal disciplinary process. When the investigation has been completed the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- The scope of the investigation
- The conclusion of the investigation
- Any action which has resulted from the complaint

### **Stage 2**

If the complainant does not accept the outcome from Stage 1 they may write to the Chairman of the Governing Body, c/o Queen Elizabeth High School, who will further investigate the issue. The Chair will respond to the complainant within 10 working days using the format outlined above.

### **Stage 3**

If the complainant does not accept the outcome from Stage 2 they may ask that the complaint is heard by a Governing Body panel consisting of a minimum of 3 governors and which will include a minimum of 1 independent adjudicator. The panel will meet within 15 working days of the complainant rejecting Stage 2 and the school will inform the complainant in writing of the panel's recommendations within 5 working days of the meeting. The outcome of Stage 3 represents a final decision regarding any complaints.

In some instances you may wish to make a complaint in respect of the school to the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The EFA will hear complaints about academies which fit into either of the 2 following categories:

- Not complying with this policy when considering a complaint, or if this policy does not meet statutory requirements
- The school has failed to comply with any duties imposed upon it under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State

In this event please review the EFA's "Procedure for dealing with complaints about academies" document for further advice and guidance.

Please note that it is important to recognise that it may be impossible to meet the above timescales due to unforeseen circumstances that are outside the control of the school, for example staff absence of a key witness. If any of the above targets cannot be met for any reasons then the complainant will be contacted immediately and informed of the reasons why and given new timescales.

At any formal disciplinary hearing, the staff member may be accompanied by a colleague, friend or union representative if they so wish. It may be appropriate at informal stages for such support to be available in agreement with the Complaints Coordinator.

### **Recording Complaints**

A record of all formal complaints and their outcomes will be kept centrally by the Personal Assistant to the Headteacher, along with brief notes of any meetings and telephone calls.

### **Confidentiality**

All details of concerns and complaints will be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution.

### **Responsibilities**

The ultimate responsibility for the policy's implementation lies with the Headteacher in consultation with the Governing Body.

Where there is a clear case for doing so, the Headteacher will make the appropriate referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service and to the National College, supplying such details of the case as requested. Where the complaint is criminal in nature the Headteacher will also refer the case to the appropriate authorities.

This policy will be reviewed annually to take account of legal and/or other developments or sooner if it contravenes in any way legal compliance.

### **Policy Amendment Record**

Number:	Date:	Amended by:	Details and Location:
1	19.03.17	M Farmer	Checked against The Key Compliance Tracker, adjustments to some terminology to ensure compliance and clarification of interpretation.
2	18.05.17	M Farmer	Style change to incorporate change to school name. References to old name changed to reflect new name. Shelf ready from September 1 <sup>st</sup> 2017.

## Appendix 1

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM**

Please complete and return c/o the Headteacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken next.

#### **Your Details**

Name:

Student's name if you are a parent/carer:

Address and postcode:

Contact telephone number:

#### **Complaint Details**

- Please provide the details of your complaint including relevant date(s), time(s), place(s) and the name of people involved, as appropriate.
  
- What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?
  
- What action do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
  
- Please provide details of any supporting paperwork related to your complaint.

Signature of the Complainant:..... Date:.....

For Official Use

#### **Formal Complaint**

Date acknowledgement sent:

Member of Staff dealing with the complaint:

Date of complaint referred:

Outcome of investigation: