



**Ashville College**  
**School Policies**

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# **Complaints Procedure**

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# ASHVILLE COLLEGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## Introduction and Aims

The College prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents, day pupils, boarding pupils or staff have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

This complaints procedure takes into account NMS 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding.

The College Whistle-blowing Policy applies and is designed to protect those who raise a complaint in good faith.

## Definitions of Terms

Complainant	the person(s); parents, pupils who are making the complaint
College:	Ashville College, including the Boarding Houses, Pre-Prep (including EYFS) , Junior and Senior Schools.
Head, Headteacher, Headmaster:	Headmaster of the College
Pupils, Students:	Pupils who attend the College including pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage
Boarders:	Pupils who are resident either full time or for a number of nights only in one of the four boarding houses in College
NMS:	National Minimum Standards for Boarding

## Records

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. Records will be kept for at least 3 years.

## Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- The complainant, if a parent, should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher or Housemaster or Housemistress. If a pupil, their Form Tutor, Head of Year or one of the Deputy Heads. If a Boarder, their Housemaster/mistress, Form Tutor, Head of Year or one of the Deputy Heads. If a member of staff, their line manager, one of the Deputy Heads or director of studies, the HR manager or the Headmaster. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the complainant's satisfaction. If that person cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Year Head, Head of Department or a Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to senior staff will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher, Year Head, Housemaster or Housemistress unless the senior staff member deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The member of staff to whom the initial complaint was directed will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 14 days or in the event that the member of staff and the complainant

fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the complainant will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 1 of this Procedure.

### Stage 1 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the complainant should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will speak to the complainant concerned normally within 14 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the complainant will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- This Stage will be completed within 28 working days
- If the complainant is still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 2 of this Procedure.

### Stage 2 – Panel Hearing

- If the complainant seeks to involve Stage 2 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to Chairman of Governors, who will call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governing Body of the College. The Chairman of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 21 days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the Hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.
- The complainant may be accompanied to the Hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not be permitted at the Hearing.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the complainants' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 14 days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the complainant informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing, by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. The findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Headteacher.
- This Stage will be completed within 28 working days

Complainants can 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 where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them, or where any other legal obligation prevails.

#### Alternative means of Complaint

Members of the College have the right to raise a complaint with Ofsted and the Independent Schools' Inspectorate, details of which may be found on their websites:

Ofsted            [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)  
ISI                [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)

Information about the number of complaints received over the last Academic Year is available on request to the College.