




## BPET Complaints Policy

This procedure applies all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS

Signed:	
Chair of Trust Board:	Claire Delaney
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## BPET Complaints Policy

Bellevue Place Education Trust – Our commitment

*Learn. Enjoy. Succeed.*

Every BPET child and staff member enjoys a broad (LEARN) and enriched (ENJOY) learning experience, enabling them to achieve far greater individual success (SUCCEED) than they might previously have thought possible.

### Our Mission

To grow hubs of like-minded, autonomous schools with a strong support network, all of which combine academic rigour with highly enriched opportunities that deliver a personalised approach to education and exceptional outcomes for all.

Our Difference

whether there are exceptional circumstances to justify conducting an investigation into the issues raised.

- 1.5 All staff will be made aware of this complaints procedure and are expected to review this policy regularly in order that they are familiar with our process of dealing with complaints and can be of assistance when an issue is brought to their attention.
- 1.6 In this procedure:

- 2.6 Where a complaint is received outside of term time, we will consider it to have been received on the first school day following the holiday period.
- 2.75 On rare occasions a school may receive complaints from a number of parents relating to the same issue. In order to deal with these complaints efficiently the school will follow the procedure set out in Part 4.
- 2.8 If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly and given an explanation as to why this has been the case and provided with revised timescales. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority safeguarding teams or tribunals/courts, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.
- 2.9 Complainants should not approach individual BPET leaders, Local Advisory Board members or trustees to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may prevent them from considering complaints at later stages.
- 2.10 If a complainant commences legal action against the trust in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether it would be appropriate to suspend the complaints procedure until those legal proceedings have concluded.
- 2.11 If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

### 3 Records of complaints

- 3.1 A record will be kept of all written formal complaints, including at what stage they were resolved and action taken by us as a result of those complaints regardless of whether they were upheld. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential and only disclosed such( )-dencu-5(n)3( )qq0q0.0000087d08873 0 595.44 841.68 reW\*nQ EMC /Span AMCID 20/Lang (e
  - 3.1.1 access is requested by the Secretary of State;
  - 3.1.2 disclosure is required in the course of a school inspection;
  - 3.1.3 an individual has as g

meetings and discussions and encourage parents to approach staff with any concerns they may have, and aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding.

- 4.2 It is always helpful if you can fully explain the nature of the concern and identify the outcome you are looking for. Where appropriate, you may be invited to an informal meeting with the member of staff most appropriate for dealing with that concern. The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure that you are clear on what action (if any) has been agreed. This may be put in writing if appropriate.
- 4.3 If the matter is brought to the attention of the Headteacher, they may decide to deal with your concerns directly at this stage. If the concerns are about the Headteacher these should be referred directly to the Director of Education or Executive Headteacher, following this procedure starting with Stage 1.
- 4.4 The school will respect the views of a complainant who indicates that they would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff. In this case, the Headteacher will refer the complainant to another designated member of staff. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved in the circumstances leading to the complaint feels too compromised to deal with a complaint, the Headteacher may consider referring the complainant to another member of staff. The member of staff may be more senior, but this is not essential.
- 4.5 There is no suggested timescale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion, although it would be expected that most issues will be resolved within 15 school days. Where no satisfactory solution has been found, you will be advised that if you wish your concerns to be considered further you should write to the Headteacher under Stage 2 of this procedure within 15 school days.
- 4.6 EYFS Complaints

the names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of all relevant documents; and  
a clear statement of the actions that you would like us to take to resolve your complaint.

- 4.9 Your complaint will normally be acknowledged in writing within 5 school days of receipt. The date for providing a response to the complaint. This will normally be within 15 school days of receipt.
- 4.10 If appropriate, the Headteacher (or someone appointed by them) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your complaints and to explore possible resolutions. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by one other person, such as a friend, relative

5 Stage 3: Referral to the Complaints Committee

5.1 If you are dissatisfied with the decision under Stage 2, you may request that a Complaints Committee be convened to consider your complaint. The Complaints Committee will not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

5.2 To request a hearing before the Complaints Committee, you should write to the BPET Executive Assistant at [info@BPET.co.uk](mailto:info@BPET.co.uk) within 15 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of Stage 2. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply. You should ensure that you provide copies of all relevant documents and state all the grounds for your complaint and the outcome that you are looking for.

5.3 Your written request will be acknowledged within 5 school days of receipt.

5.4 The BPET Executive Assistant will arrange for a Complaints Committee to be convened, made up of at least three members, including:

Director of Education or Executive Headteacher, provided that they have had no prior involvement in the matter, who will be Chair of the Committee

An independent member from the management of the school and BPET

Other member from either (a proposed by the Chair):

- members of governance with no prior involvement in the matter
- independent of the management and running of the school
- Senior member of the BPET Central Team or independent adviser

5.5 Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 20 school days of the receipt of your request. As soon as reasonably practicable and in any event at least 5 school days before the hearing, you will be sent written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, together with brief details of the committee members who will be present. Fair consideration will be given to any bona fide objection to a particular member of the committee. You will also be in31 0u12(r4MCID 0 0 1 135.26 398



you or academy representative (as applicable) at least 3 school days before the hearing. The Complaints Committee reserves the right not to consider any documentation presented by either party less than 3 school days prior to the hearing. The Complaints Committee is under no obligation to hear oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and/or may take written statements into account. The committee will not normally accept recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

5.9 The hearing will be conducted to ensure that each party has the opportunity to address the Complaints Committee. The procedure to be followed during the hearing will be explained to the parties by letter in advance of the hearing. The BPET Executive Assistant will ensure that sufficient notes are taken to record an accurate reflection of the points considered and any decisions taken or actions agreed. Electronic recordings of the hearing will not normally be permitted and, in any event, would require the consent of all those present.

5.10 Unless otherwise stated, the procedure for the Stage 3 hearing is as follows:

- the parent and school representative will enter the hearing together;
- the Chair of the Committee will introduce the committee members and outline the process;
- the parent will explain the complaint;
- the school representative and committee members will question the parent;
- the school representative will explain the school/BPET actions;
- the parent and the committee members will question the school representative;
- the parent will sum up their complaint;

- the Chair of the Committee will explain that both parties will hear from the committee, normally within 5 school days;
- both parties will leave together while the committee decides;
- the BPET Executive Assistant will stay to assist the committee with its decision making.

5.11 The Complaints Committee reserves the right to modify the above procedure at their sole discretion, for example requiring the parent and the school representative to present their complaint/actions separately to the Complaints Committee in the absence of the other party.

5.12 A Complaints Committee may be adjourned if the Complaints Committee require further evidence or in exceptional circumstances (for example, if clarification sought by the Complaints Committee is

- 6 Stage 4: Referral of complaint to Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- 6.1 If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the Complaints Committee, you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The ESFA will only investigate whether the complaint was handled properly and in accordance with education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.
- 6.2 At the time of writing this procedure, details about the ESFA procedure and the ESFA academy complaints form are available at:

[How ESFA handles complaints about academies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-esfa-handles-complaints-about-academies)

Or you can write to the ESFA at the following address:

Academy Complaints and Customer Insight Unit  
Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Cheylesmore House  
5 Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT

Or submit to the ESFA via the [Department for Education complaints form](#).

They will not overturn a decision about a complaint. However, if they find the school or Trust did not deal with the complaint properly, they will request the complaint is looked at again and that the procedures meet the requirements set out in the Regulations.

## 7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The role of the BPET Executive Assistant is to act as the clerk to the Committee.

7.2 The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the Complaints Committee, and should:

ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;  
liaise with staff, Headteacher, Chief Executive and Chair of the Trustees to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure;  
be mindful of the timescales to respond to complaints;  
ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR);



- 8 Part 2: Concerns or complaints from other persons
- 8.1 Part 1 of this complaints policy applies only to complaints made by parents or carers of current registered pupils of schools within BPET. However, BPET wishes to work closely with other members of the local community and will deal with their concerns and complaints as follows:
- 8.2 Stage 1 - a concern regarding a school or its operations may be made to any member of staff. That member of staff will attempt to resolve the matter immediately or may, if appropriate, refer the matter to their line manager or member of the senior leadership team (SLT) who is best placed to deal with the concern. It is expected that most concerns will be responded to orally or in writing within 5 school days. If a longer period is required, you will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.
- 8.3 Stage 2 - where a concern is not resolved at stage 1, or you wish your concerns to be dealt with immediately as a formal complaint, you should put your complaint in writing and send this to the Headteacher of the relevant school to investigate. The Headteacher may delegate the task of investigation and/or responding to the complaint to a member of SLT or may escalate the complaint straight to stage 3. A formal response to the complaint will usually be provided within 10 school days of receipt of the letter of complaint although if a longer period is required to respond, you will be kept updated.
- 8.4 Stage 3 - if you are not satisfied with the response at stage 2, you may request a review by writing to the BPET Executive Assistant of BPET. You should write to the BPET Executive Assistant within 10 school days of receipt of the letter at stage 2. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply. The BPET Executive Assistant will arrange for a Central Team member to consider the complaint alone or may convene a complaints committee on the same terms as set out in Part 1 of this complaints policy. The decision at this stage will usually be sent to you within 20 school days of receipt of the request for a review. The decision at stage 3



restricting telephone calls to specified days and times or banning the complainant from the

10 Part 4: Complaint campaigns

10.1 For the purposes of this policy, a complaint campaign is defined as a complaint from three or more separate individuals (whether or not connected with a school or BPET) which are all based on the same subject.

10.2 Depending on the subject in question, we may deviate from the procedure set out in this policy and instead:

send a template response to all complainants and/or

website (as applicable)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Appendix 1 - Matters excluded from scope of this policy

Excluded Matters	Signposting
Admissions	



Appendix 2 - Complaints Form

Appendix 3 - Summary of Complaints Procedure for Parents & Carers (Part 1)

Stage 1: Informal concerns	Parent brings complaint to attention of member of staff
	Issue to be resolved within 15 school days
	Where no satisfactory solution has been found, parent to be advised that they should proceed to Stage 2
Stage 2: Formal Written Complaint	Parent to put complaint in writing using Complaint Form within 15 school days of outcome of stage 1
	Complaint to be acknowledged within 5 school days
	(Optional) Meeting with parents within 10 school days
	Response to the complaint sent within 15 school days
Stage 3: Referral to Complaints Committee	Parent to request hearing within 15 school days of receiving notice of the outcome of Stage 2
	Request to be acknowledged within 5 school days
	Hearing to take place within 20 school days of receipt of request
	Notification of date, time and place of the hearing and details of the committee members present sent at least 5 school days before the hearing
	School representative and parents to submit evidence in support of their case to BPET Executive Assistant at least 3 school days before the hearing
	Complaints Committee decision sent normally not more than 5 school days after the hearing