

CE009 – Compliments and Complaints Policy & Procedure

Review Date	Ratified Date	Next Planned Review
08.11.2023		November 2026

Directorate (Indicate which applies by ticking the appropriate box)								
General	Human Resources	Finance	College	ACC	Community Services	Health and Safety	Fundraising	Marketing
			X					

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Ratified by	College SLT

Reason for this Review	On the back of some parental feedback, all complaint stages reviewed, and some changes made.
Were changes made?	Yes
Summary of changes	SLT removed and Governors now at stage 2 and additional contact of the EFA added for the unresolved complaints
Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Human Rights Act 1998 • Equality Act 2010 • The Care Act 2014 • Mental Health Act 1983 (amended 2007) • Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 • Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 • Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
Underpinning Knowledge – What have we used to ensure the policy is current	Equality and diversity knowledge, safeguarding and College policies
Linked Henshaw's Policies	Henshaws Whistleblowing Confidential Reporting Policy
Equality Impact Completed	See Appendix one

Suggested Action	Disseminate to all staff
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Contents

1. Aims	4
2. Policy Statement	4
Compliments & Complaints: Procedures	4
3. Informal Procedure	4
4. Formal Procedure	5
4.1. Formal Compliments	5
4.2. Formal Complaints.....	5
5. Stage 1 Complaint.....	5
6. Stage 2 Complaint.....	5
7. Stage 3 Complaint.....	6
8. Unresolved Complaints.....	6
9. Annual Reporting and Evaluation	7
Appendix 1	8

1. Aims

- To provide an open and accessible way for students and stakeholders to raise issues
- To respond to complaints in a professional, courteous and timely fashion
- To encourage students to practice the skills of choice and control
- To continuously improve the services offered by Henshaws Specialist College

2. Policy Statement

The College is committed to providing high quality services to its students and stakeholders. To do this, we need to constantly look for ways of improving how we work. Students and stakeholders are in the best position to judge how we are doing, and we welcome feedback from them.

Any and all formal complaints received are recorded and acted upon. Very often, the complaint can be resolved quickly. An impartial and objective manager will be appointed to investigate the complaint fairly and fully to deal with it quickly and confidentially.

The College is also pleased to receive letters of praise for our staff, and for the service that we provide.

Compliments & Complaints: Procedures

3. Informal Procedure

- Many complaints can and should be raised informally and can be dealt with immediately to everyone's satisfaction. The aim is to resolve informal complaints quickly, keep matters low-key and enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the matter has been referred.
- Students and stakeholders who have a complaint about any aspect of College, but do not at this stage want to make a formal complaint, should talk to any member of staff. The member of staff will record this on a 'Compliments and Complaints Informal Procedure Form'. Students would usually approach their Programme Leader, Starter Leader, or House Manager but they can talk to any member of staff in the first instance.
- The member of staff hearing the complaint will take it seriously. If they can resolve the complaint themselves 'on the spot' they will do so; otherwise, they will refer it to an appropriate colleague for immediate action.
- The complaint, and the action taken to resolve it, will be recorded on the College Databridge system, using the Event Log feature if it is a student complaint.
- Compliments expressed informally will be acknowledged at the time, passed on if appropriate, and recorded.

4. Formal Procedure

4.1. Formal Compliments

Compliments made by students and stakeholders are always appreciated. Compliments will be recorded by the Administration Manager and passed on to the member of staff, team or department recognised.

4.2. Formal Complaints

- Complaints that cannot be resolved using the Informal Procedures should follow these Formal Procedures.
- Complainants will be expected to bring their complaint to the College's attention within 6 weeks of the reason for the complaint occurring.
- Complainants will be invited formally to write to express their complaint or to complete a 'Complaints Formal Procedure Form'. These are available from Reception, in accessible formats, and students will be supported to complete the form, if required.
- The complaint will normally be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days.
- The complaint will be recorded by the Administration Manager, who will refer it to the appropriate member of staff for investigation.

Students will be able to use their preferred method of communication, eg. Speech, Makaton, VOCA etc.

5. Stage 1 Complaint

- The nominated staff member will investigate the complaint and communicate a response to the complainant within 10 working days of the complaint date.
- If the complaint is upheld, the investigating staff member will let the complainant know what is to be done to rectify the matter.
- If the complaint is found to be unjustified, the investigating staff member will explain why.
- The complainant will be asked to confirm and sign that they are satisfied with the response.
- Documentation will be returned to the Administration Manager for recording and filing or escalating to the next stage.

6. Stage 2 Complaint

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation carried out under Stage 1, it will move to Stage 2.
- The complaint will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

- The chair will either investigate the complaint or pass it to an appropriate Governor for them to investigate and communicate a response to the complainant within 7 working days of the referral to them.
- If the complaint is upheld, the investigating Governor will let the complainant know what is to be done to rectify the matter.
- If the complaint is still found to be unjustified, the investigating Governor will explain why.
- The complainant will be asked to confirm and sign that they are satisfied with the response.
- Documentation will be returned to the Administration Manager for recording and filing.

7. Stage 3 Complaint

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation carried out under Stage 2, it will move to Stage 3 (final).
- The complaint will be referred to the Chief Executive.
- The Chief Executive will investigate the complaint and communicate a response to the complainant within 7 working days of the referral to them.
- If the complaint is upheld, the Chief Executive will let the complainant know what is to be done to rectify the matter.
- If the complaint is still found to be unjustified, the Chief Executive will explain why.
- The complainant will be asked to confirm and sign that they are satisfied with the response.
- Documentation will be returned to the Administration Manager for recording and filing.

8. Unresolved Complaints

Following the action taken at Stage 3, and not before, if the complainant feels that the matter has not been dealt with fairly or investigated properly, having exhausted the College's procedures, they may wish to refer their complaint to Ofsted, the EFSA, or the Care Quality Commission.

These agencies would expect complaints to be made in writing.

Contact details are:

Ofsted

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

EFSA

Email complaints.EFSA@education.gov.uk

Care Quality Commission

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us/how-complain/complain-about-service-or-provider>

9. Annual Reporting and Evaluation

The annual end of year report will monitor the compliments and complaints logs and include this in the evaluative arrangements for college services. Trend data will be used to benchmark the level of complaints year on year.

Appendix 1

Question	Explanation/Justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	This policy has been written in conjunction with a wide range of evidence based literature and practice that has been designed to follow similar core values to our organisation, and as such we are being mindful.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed .		
2. Stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. Adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias	✓	All policies and procedures will be adapted to meet a member of staff's reasonable access requirements.
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

