



# Complaints Policy 2024-2025

**Author:**  
Head

**Approved by the Board of Governors:**  
September 2024

**Date of next review:**  
July 2025

**MORE  
HOUSE  
SCHOOL**  
KNIGHTSBRIDGE

This complaints procedure is available to parents of pupils currently on roll at More House and is on our website. A copy of it can also be supplied by the School on request.

## 1. Introduction

1.1. The School enjoys close relationships with parents and, should a concern or complaint arise, it is expected that parents will contact the School as a matter of urgency so that the issue can be discussed and resolved. If parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

1.2. A complaint refers to any matter about which a parent or pupil is unhappy and seeks action.

1.3. Separate procedures apply if a child protection issue has arisen (see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Safer Recruitment Policy) or if a pupil has been expelled or asked to leave (see the Expulsion Appeals Procedure). These policies are available on the School website.

1.4. All time scales in this document refer to term time. Working days refer to Monday to Friday. The time scale may need to be extended by a further 10 working days if relevant staff are unavailable during School holidays, or if the complexity of the issue requires it.

## 2. Stage 1 - Informal Complaint

2.1. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

2.2. If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their daughter's form tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult a Head of Department, Senior Teacher or relevant School Leadership Team member.

2.3. Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Senior Teacher or relevant School Leadership Team member will be referred to the appropriate form tutor or subject teacher unless the individual receiving the complaint deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

2.4. The recipient of the complaint 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 10 working days, or in the event that the recipient of the complaint and parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents may proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

## 3. Stage 2 - Formal Complaint

3.1. If parents are not satisfied with the response to a complaint made in accordance with Stage 1 of these procedures, or consider the complaint to warrant a more formal process, then parents should contact the Head via a [Formal Complaints Proforma](#). The completion of the [Formal Complaints Proforma](#) will invoke the formal complaints procedure. The Head will decide, after considering the content of the [Formal Complaints Proforma](#), the appropriate course of action to take. If the Formal Complaints proforma is not filled out, then the written communication must clearly state that the complaint is being raised as a Stage 2 Formal Complaint.

3.2. In term time, the Head will respond to the parents concerned, within 5 working days of receiving the [Formal Complaints Proforma](#), to discuss the matter. This would be extended to 10 days if received during School holidays. If possible, a resolution will

be reached at this stage.

3.3. It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.

3.4. The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

3.5. 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 parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for her decision.

3.6. Parents will be informed of the decision within 10 working days of the formal complaint being made, or 20 days if the complaint has been received during the School holidays. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

## **4. Stage 3 - Panel Hearing**

4.1. If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they should outline their complaint in a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors, whose contact details can be found on the Contact Us page of the website. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged by the Clerk to the Governors within 5 working days.

4.2. The Clerk to the Governors will assemble a Complaints Panel as instructed by the Chair of Governors and will forward the complaint for their consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three individuals not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. These will be two Governors and an additional person who shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Clerk. The Clerk, on behalf of the Panel, will then schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days.

4.3. 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 5 working days prior to the hearing.

4.4. The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. If the parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, the School is obliged to hold the panel hearing and to report on the outcome, and on any subsequent recommendations as detailed in the Complaints Policy.

4.5. If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

4.6. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete and communicate, as set out below, within 10 working days of the Hearing.

4.7. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and recommendation, if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Chair of Governors and other Governors who were not part of the Panel and, where relevant, the person against whom the complaint was made.

## 5. Confidentiality and Records

5.1. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except as required of the School by paragraph 33 (k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, namely where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them, or where any other legal obligation prevails.

5.2. A written record will be kept for a minimum of 7 years of all formal complaints (Stage 2 of this procedure), whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage (Stage 2) or proceed to a panel hearing (Stage 3) and the action taken by the School as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether they are upheld).

5.3. Complaints which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file. To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within 5 days for an in-year transfer, or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term, as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

5.4. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated under this procedure.

## 6. Persistent/Repeated Complaints

6.1 Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this will be considered as vexatious and outside the scope of this policy.

## 7. Complaints Procedure for Prospective Parents

7.1 More House School follows the procedure set out in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above for complaints relating to pupils currently on roll with the school.

7.2 Any prospective parent or guardian wishing to raise a complaint, should follow the process for Stage 1 of the procedure above by contacting the Head of Admissions in the first instance. If the parent is not satisfied by the response from the Head of Admissions or if the complaint warrants a more formal process, then the parent should contact the Head via a [Formal Complaints Proforma](#) . The completion of the [Formal Complaints Proforma](#) will invoke the formal complaints procedure. The Head will decide, after considering the content of the [Formal Complaints Proforma](#), the appropriate course of action to take.

7.3 If the matter is still unresolved or if the complaint is concerning the Head, then the parent should refer to Stage 3 and contact the Clerk to the Governors at [clerk@morehousemail.org.uk](mailto:clerk@morehousemail.org.uk) who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings by a Complaints Panel.

## 8. Appeals against Exclusion

8.1 Parents who wish to appeal against a decision regarding a pupil being excluded on a permanent or fixed term basis from the School, should refer to Section 10.6 and Appendix 10 of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

## 9. External Agencies

9.1 Parents can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph 6(3)(f) of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as subsequently amended); by the Secretary of State, or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority, in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

### Department for Education

Tel: 0370 0002288

Website: [www.gov.uk/contact-dfe](http://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe)

### ISI

Tel: 0207 600 0100

Email: [info@isi.net](mailto:info@isi.net)