



Complaints Policy

"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification."
(Romans 14:19)

Living in a fallen world, there are inevitably times when mistakes are made and a parent in the school has reason to complain. Complaints come in various forms and can refer to many different aspects of school life. Since they can damage relationships and become the source of division within the school, even the smallest complaint should be handled sensitively.

This policy applies to all sections of the School, including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Introduction and Aims

Immanuel Christian School highly values its partnership with parents and seeks to resolve any concerns or complaints, responding quickly, thoroughly and effectively when such concerns or complaints are raised.

A complaint is defined as any matter about which a parent of a pupil (or anyone with parental responsibilities for a pupil) is unhappy and seeks action by the School.

Even in the happiest and best run school communities, complaints are likely to be raised from time to time. It is the intention of this document (which is available to parents and prospective parents on the School's website and in hard copy on request) to set out the most appropriate ways in which such complaints can be addressed.

Immanuel Christian School aims to respond to parents' concerns and complaints, and to improve the School's practice in the light of constructive criticism. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School, can be dealt with under the scope of this procedure which is only available to parents of pupils, meaning current registered pupils. This procedure will only apply to past pupils if the initial complaint was raised when the pupil was still registered as a current pupil.

This policy does not apply to complaints regarding admissions, exclusions or fees.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is generally in the interest of all concerned that complaints be resolved in as efficient and amicable a way as possible and this can usually be done in an informal fashion.

Where parents have a complaint, verbal or e-mail contact in the first place is with class teacher in the primary years and form tutor in the secondary years, who will acknowledge receipt within three working days. This can often lead to the matter being rapidly resolved.

Early attention to concerns can prevent situations from escalating and parents are asked to raise concerns and complaints with their child's class teachers/form tutors without delay. Where appropriate the class teacher/form tutor will arrange a meeting to discuss the parent's concern rather than exploring sensitive or complex matters by e-mail.

The Head teacher can be contacted via the school contact details by any parent who wishes to arrange an appointment to discuss a concern or complaint.

Where such complaints are addressed by parents to the Head teacher, class teachers/form tutors will in any case be involved.

A written record should be kept by class teachers/form tutors of any such complaint and passed to the Head teacher, even where a complaint is rapidly and completely resolved.

The School aims to deal with complaints promptly and sets 15 working days as the target timescale within which Stage 1 complaints should be satisfactorily resolved.

Where complaints are not successfully resolved in this way, a more formal procedure is also available.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

Parents should now be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will seek to acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within three working days of receipt thereof.

The Head teacher will carry out appropriate investigations and keep a written record of all meetings and interviews pertaining to the complaint. The Head teacher will then produce a decision in writing within 15 working days.

Copies of the written record and the proposed resolution to the complaint will be made available to the complainant. Although all formal complaints will be made in writing, this does not mean that the formal stage is automatically triggered whenever a concern is expressed in writing, for example, by e-mail. Complaints will usually only progress to the formal stage after first being considered at the preliminary stage and only then if the complainant intends to escalate a matter to the formal stage. If parents remain dissatisfied, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Parents will be referred to submit their complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors who has authority to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. The Chair will acknowledge written complaints within three working days of receipt.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel, which will comprise three individuals who were not involved in any aspect of the complaint and one member who is independent of the management and running of the School who has held a position of responsibility and used to scrutinizing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments.

Where a hearing is called, all relevant documentation should be sent to members of the panel at least five working days prior to the hearing and the hearing itself will take place within ten working days of the complaint being raised with the Chair of Governors.

Parents may be accompanied to a hearing by one other person, perhaps a relative or friend. Legal representation at a hearing is not considered to be appropriate.

The Panel will carry out any further investigation which is deemed appropriate and will then reach a decision and inform parents in writing as soon as practicable thereafter and within five working days, other than in exceptional circumstances. Findings and recommendations of the Panel will be circulated to the complainant and where relevant, the person complained about. They will also be available for inspection on the School premises by the Governors and the Headteacher.

Complaints Log

The school will keep a record of all complaints in a Complaints Log. This will be in the format shown in Appendix 1 of this policy. The Complaints Log will record the number of complaints received, the nature of the complaints, the number of justified complaints, the time period to resolve the complaints, the stage at which each complaint was resolved and any action the school has taken in response to any complaint.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Additional requirements apply to the School's EYFS arrangements, beyond those which apply to the main school. Written complaints about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements at the School will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days and a record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

In addition, parents can contact Ofsted and ISI as below:

- Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Tel: 0300 123 1231
- ISI: Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA. Tel: 0207 600 0100

Confidentiality

All written complaints and evidence submitted to the school will be kept confidential and not disclosed to anyone who does not have direct cause to receive it except 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.

Number of complaints

Number of complaints in 2020/21 - 0

Immanuel Christian School
Complaints Policy – version 3
Adopted by the Governors on 02/12/2014.
Updated – November 2015
Updated – January 2017
Updated – July 2017
Adopted by the Governors on 09/12/2017.
Updated and amended – September 2019
Updated – January 2022

Appendix 1

Complaints Log

Complaint Number	Complaint Name	Issue	Date Received	Date Resolved	Stage Resolved At	Justified Y/N	Action Taken