



Complaints Procedure

Wynstones School aims to provide quality teaching and pastoral care to its pupils. However, we understand that from time to time members of our community may feel that they wish to address concerns that arise during the time that they are with us. It is our policy to listen to any such concerns, to ensure a full investigation is carried out and to address them in an objective and unbiased manner at all times.

Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except insofar as is required of the school by paragraph 6 (2) (j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Upon the request of either the School Inspection Service (SIS) or Ofsted, Wynstones will provide a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

Complainants and issues

Wynstones will accept complaints from:

- Parents/ Guardians of pupils (those who have parental responsibility for the pupil)
- Pupils of the Upper School
- Members of our community
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Self-employed workers
- Ex-members of our community

This procedure should be invoked where there is cause for concern or a complaint in areas such as:

- Treatment regarding a pupil by another child, teacher or another member of our working community
- A pastoral care issue
- A SEND provision issue
- Concern regarding an educational trip or activity
- The disciplining or detention of a pupil
- Temporary or permanent exclusion from the school

Procedure for raising a concern or a complaint

The following procedure has been designed to inform members of our community what to do when they have a concern or complaint. It gives the process and timelines in order to manage expectations throughout the process and what they need to communicate when making their concerns known. We hope that this will provide members of our community with a means of redress.

Stage 1 - Informal Stage - Concern

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned and if this is not the Class Teacher or Class Guardian, we ask that they be informed of the matter as well. This may be by letter, email, telephone or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most concerns will be resolved at this informal stage.

If at any stage either party feels that there is a breakdown in communication or that the situation has become frustrated, the matter can be passed to the Chair of either the Lower or Upper School (or directly to the Chair of College as appropriate) and will continue to be handled as an informal concern.

In the case of the concern not being resolved, it may be appropriate to address it directly to the Chair of College (or to the chair of Council, if the concern is about the Chair of College). If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the College Secretary, by either email or telephone (college@wynstones.com 01452 429225).

Stage 2 - Formal Stage - Complaint

If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage, you are requested to move to the next stage of our procedure and put the complaint in writing to the Chair of College (or to the chair of Council if the complaint involves the Chair of College). This can be emailed to college@wynstones.com or sent in a sealed envelope marked "private and confidential" and delivered either in person or by post.

We provide forms in Reception to help identify key details (including the name of the person you took the informal concern to), which will help us investigate your complaint and ask that if you do not utilise this form, you use it as a guide to outline the key issues that give you cause to raise a complaint. You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed with our investigation.

Any complaint will be acknowledged within 24 hours or by return of post if no email is provided, with clear guidance on how the school will proceed. The Chair of College will ensure that all complaints are addressed in a manner that considers the views of all parties and upholds the school's policies.

The Chair of College may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution depending on the nature of the concern. If you accept that invitation, you may bring a friend or associate to be a “speaking partner” to help you explain the nature of your complaint. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Chair of College, but if this is not the case, you will hear within seven days of the meeting with you, of how the school intends to proceed.

(We ask that complainants consider that at times an investigation may take longer if it involves a member of our paid working community as they have statutory rights that need to be upheld. In such cases, the school will keep the complainant informed on a regular basis. We ask that complainants respect that the School will not discuss employment matters due to employment law covering privacy and confidentiality.)

The school aims to investigate fully all complaints within 28 calendar days of receiving a formal complaint. All investigations will be carried out in an objective and pragmatic manner and will, in all cases, be ratified by the Chair of College.

Once the Chair of College is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Chair of College will also give reasons for the decision.

The Chair of College will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Copies of records can be requested by the complainant. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they should inform the Chair of College in writing that they wish to proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing - Appeal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, an appeal should be made in writing either via email to the Chair of Council, Ned Skelton nskelton@wynstones.com or sent addressed to Ned in a sealed envelope marked “private and confidential” and delivered either in person or by post to the school. The receipt of the notice of appeal will be acknowledged within seven days in writing.

If a complaint is taken to Stage 3 because the complainant felt that the school failed to resolve their complaint fairly, the Chair of Council will:

- Request the complaint file.
- Review how the matter has been dealt with to date.
- Contact the complainant directly to discuss the matter further.

At this point one of two outcomes can arise. Having considered the complaint file and the reasons given by the complainant for the need for a hearing, the Chair of Council may:

- be satisfied that a fair outcome has been reached and no further investigation needs to take place, or
- feel the need to re-open the investigation and in such case organise at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, at least one of whom will be independent of the running and management of the school and be considered a person of “good stature” in the community, to form a panel to hear the appeal.

A hearing will be organised within 21 days of Stage 3 being invoked. The panel will consider existing evidence as well as any new evidence that is made available or is revealed as a result of the re-investigation. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.

Where further investigation is required, the Appeal Committee will decide how it should be carried out. After the appeal meeting is adjourned, the appeal committee will take time for deliberation before reaching a decision. In most situations, they will reach a decision on the same day and inform the complainant of the decision verbally. This will be confirmed in writing within seven days to both the complainant and the school. If an appeal is upheld, Council will be responsible for ensuring that action is taken to rectify any wrongdoing and resolve the complaint.

Alerting external bodies

Parents may also complain directly to SIS or to Ofsted if they wish, if they believe the school's complaints procedure has not been properly used.

SIS may be contacted at: The Schools Inspection Service, Tolbury House, Bruton, Somerset BZ10 0DG

Ofsted can be contacted at: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Wynstones

A Steiner Waldorf School

Complaint Form

Your name	
Your address	
Preferred daytime tel. No	
Preferred evening tel. No.	
Child's name	
Your relationship to the child	

Please give concise details of your complaint	
Date:	
Time:	
Witnesses:	
Detailed Account:	
No. of additional pages attached:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. whom have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)	

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What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

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Signature:	Date:
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School Use		
Rec'd by:		Date:
Sent by:		Date:
Outcome sent by:		Date:
Complaint referred to:		Date:
		Date:
		Date:
		Date: