

# BHASVIC

## COMPLAINTS POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

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**MARCH 2026**

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**MARCH 2027**

## **Note for Staff**

- **Pages 1-8: Complaints Policy**
- **Pages 9-11: Guidance for Staff**

Additional notes for staff handling complaints are found on page 9 onwards.

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## **Working together to resolve issues**

Parents' carers and the college share the same goal: supporting student's education. Sometimes questions or concerns arise. This document gives you clear steps to share your views and resolve issues quickly and positively.

### **Why this matters**

We know you value clear communication and we want your feedback to make a difference. When the process feels unclear or slow, it can be frustrating and leave you feeling unsure about what to do next. By giving you simple, transparent steps for raising issues, we aim to help you feel heard and supported.

### **How this guide helps**

Most issues can be resolved quickly when you know who to speak to and what to expect.

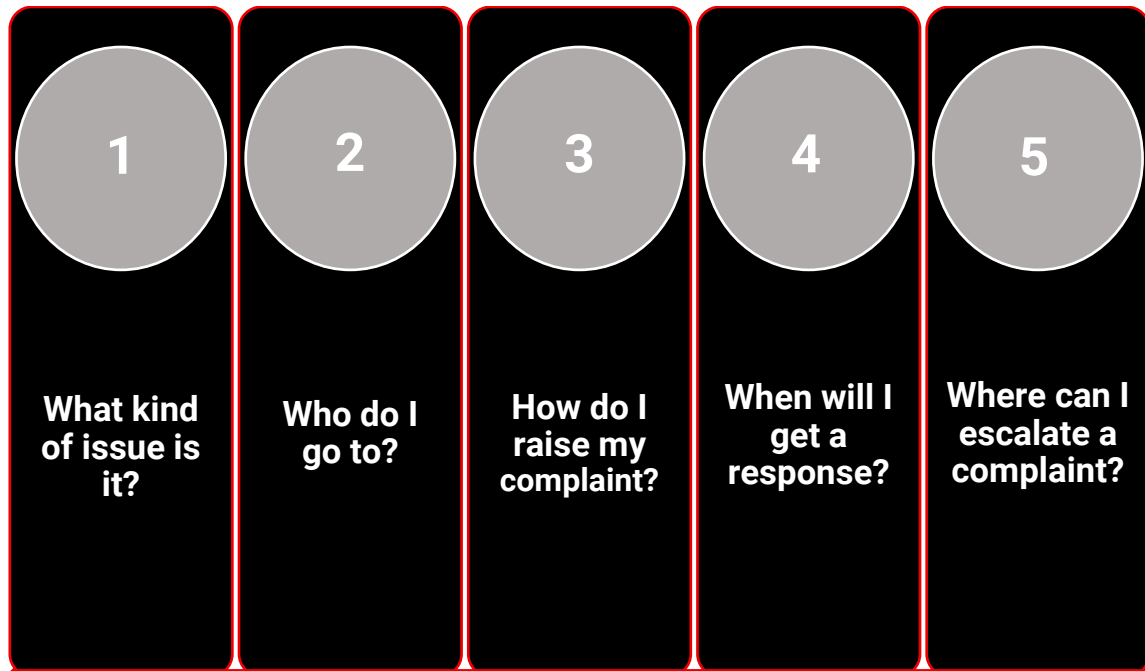
This guide will support you to follow our complaint procedure. Our goal is to keep the focus on your young person's education while building positive, supportive partnerships between you and BHASVIC.

## **Five steps to raising an issue or making a complaint at BHASVIC**

When issues come up, you need to know how to raise these with us to get an outcome that supports you and your young person.

Relationships between parents and carers and BHASVIC will last for a couple of years and may well go beyond that if successive siblings attend the college. Ensuring mutual trust and respect is essential to making them work in the best interests of your young person.

The best way to resolve concerns is through clear, respectful communication





## 1. What kind of issue is it?

Complaints come in different shapes and sizes. The best first step is to identify what kind of issue it is, as this is likely to lead to the quickest action.

<b>Is it feedback?</b>	<b>Is it a concern?</b>	<b>Is it a complaint?</b>
<i><b>You need to be heard</b></i>	<i><b>You need an answer</b></i>	<i><b>You need action</b></i>
Sometimes you will want to share your voice with us without needing a response, but you expect us to listen and take it on board. Feedback helps us to hear and adapt to parents' and carers views.	Sometimes you have a worry or doubt over an important issue and you are looking for reassurance. BHASVIC takes informal concerns seriously and makes every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.	Sometimes you are dissatisfied with our actions (or lack of action). Step 3 in this document outlines our official complaints policy.

## 2. Who do I go to?

Often issues can be resolved by the person closest to your young person.

<b>Discuss it with their teacher/tutor</b>	<b>Raise it to a middle or upper leader</b>	<b>Escalate it to a senior leader</b>
Go to these people first for anything that directly involves your young person's classroom experience. Teachers and tutors know your young person best and can usually sort things quickly.	Take it here if the issue is wider than just one lesson or one subject, or if it can't be resolved by the teacher or tutor. Heads of department, Heads of faculty and Guidance managers have oversight across classes and study programmes and can coordinate support.	Go here for whole-college issues, serious concerns, or if earlier steps haven't worked. The principal will delegate the complaint to a senior leader or upper manager to investigate and respond. Any further appeal will then go to the principal or governors to hear.
Examples: homework, progress concern, lesson content, assessment	Examples: prolonged staff or student absence, repeated issues	Examples: safeguarding, college policies, staff conduct
		

### 3. How do I raise my complaint?

Concerns are best resolved in discussion with the college, and we treat these as an informal complaint.

#### **Informal concerns or complaints:**

These can be raised directly with staff via email or phone.

If you are unsure where to direct a complaint, send it to [info@bhasvic.ac.uk](mailto:info@bhasvic.ac.uk) and we will make sure it gets to the right person.

#### **Follow one step at a time**

Start with a query aimed at resolving things quickly with those closest to your young person, and only escalate if you truly need to.

#### **Keep a record**

Note when you've spoken to a teacher or manager, so you can show what steps you have followed.

#### **Suggest a clear outcome**

Be clear on what you are looking for from BHASVIC and ensure it is realistic, so we can see if it is possible.

#### **Start with the facts**

Write down what happened, when, and who was involved. Be clear, relevant and avoid long stories.

#### **Stay objective**

Avoid accusations against individuals, direct your issue toward the processes or decisions that led to the issue.

#### **Be positive**

Make your complaint constructive, focused on solutions, and trust us to listen.

We aim to resolve an informal complaint within ten working days (in some cases it may take longer, but we will keep you informed)

## Formal Complaints

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, it can be escalated.

### Write to the Principal

Outline the steps you've already taken and include any previous correspondence.

### An appropriate manager will look at it

Your complaint will be reviewed by an upper manager or senior leader who will look into what happened, speak to those involved, and decide what actions are needed.

### They will handle matters:

- fairly
- promptly
- with respect for everyone involved

### Possible outcomes include:

- any misunderstanding is cleared up
- the complaint is upheld and we take actions to address what has gone wrong
- the complaint is not upheld (and you are told why)
- the complaint cannot be progressed (for example, if there is not enough information)

### If you are not satisfied

If you disagree with the outcome, you can:

- appeal to the Principal (or Chair of Governors if the Principal handled your case)
- if the issue remains unresolved, you may refer it to the Department for Education.

#### 4. When to expect a response

We will acknowledge a formal complaint within five working days and aim to resolve formal complaints within ten working days (in some cases it may take longer, but we will keep you informed)

## How complaints go wrong

Tensions can run high when you're concerned about your young person, but some approaches make matters worse.

<b>Lacking partnership</b>	<b>Only use A.I. with caution</b>
Having a good relationship with BHASVIC is important and it benefits all to move on after complaints are resolved.	A.I. doesn't always get it right when citing laws and can make a complaint more complex than necessary.
<b>Targeting people</b>	<b>Using social media</b>
Making it personal to individual college staff members takes things too far; keep it to challenging college policy.	Sharing your complaint on social media can be harmful to those involved and will not lead to a quicker resolution.
<b>Behaving Aggressively</b>	<b>Building a crowd</b>
Abusive and aggressive behaviour will never be tolerated by BHASVIC and may have consequences for you.	Other parents may share your views, but your complaint should be specific to you and your child.

## What this policy covers

This policy applies to complaints from:

- students
- parents and carers
- members of the public

It does **not** cover:

- staff complaints (which are handled through separate HR procedures)
- contractual disputes
- issues already in legal proceedings

We may choose not to investigate complaints that are clearly malicious or vexatious.

### **Monitoring and review**

- We review this policy every year, or sooner if required by law or guidance.
- The Principal keeps a log of all formal complaints and reports this annually to Governors.
- Complaint records are kept for three years unless safeguarding rules require longer retention.

### **We value your feedback**

Complaints help us improve our systems, communication, and support for students. We take all concerns seriously and appreciate the opportunity to learn from them.

### **References**

This guide has used content from [www.parentkind.org.uk](http://www.parentkind.org.uk)

## Complaint-Handling: Guidance for Staff

### 1. General Principles

- Follow our Trust Culture Statement ([link](#)).
- Some complaints may be difficult or impossible to investigate and resolve – for example, if they are:
  - made long after the event
  - anonymous
  - only made verbally
  - made on the condition that the complainant's identity cannot be shared

### 2. Where to Direct a Complaint

Direct the complaint to the appropriate person:

Subject of Complaint	Direct to
About a member of staff	Line manager
About a specific subject	Relevant Head of Department
About support staff provision-staff provision	Relevant Support Staff Manager
About more than one subject or student welfare	Guidance Manager
Anything not covered above, or if unsure	Executive Assistant to the Principal

#### Note:

- The complaint is normally handled by the manager closest to the issue.
- If the complaint concerns the Principal, the Chair of Governors manages the complaint.
- The Principal does not normally investigate complaints in order to handle any appeal.

### 3. Investigating a Complaint

When handling a complaint:

- **Establish the nature of the complaint**
  - Is this a formal or informal complaint?

- **Establish the facts**
  - Gather relevant information.
  - Keep clear, factual notes – they may be needed if the complaint goes to appeal.
  - Remember that notes may be shared with third parties, so write them carefully.
- **Explain the process to the complainant**
  - Make sure they have a copy of the complaints policy and understand what will happen next.
  - Highlight any implications, such as the need to share their complaint with those involved.
  - Keep them updated on timelines and expected response times.
- **Keep staff informed**
  - Staff who are the subject of a complaint should be kept updated on progress – be mindful of your duty of care to them.
  - There may be limits to what can be shared; seek advice from HR or your line manager if unsure.
  - Inform staff of the outcome and any actions as early as possible.
- **Identify patterns**
  - Managers should be alert to any recurring themes in complaints.

#### 4. Complaint Outcomes

If a complaint is **upheld**:

- the manager should seek advice from senior leaders over what proposed action the college should take.

A complaint **may be rejected** (fully or partly) if:

- It conflicts with college policy, even if the complainant believes it is reasonable.
- It is malicious.
- If it contradicts the professional judgement of the manager handling it.

#### 5. Communicating the Outcome

- The outcome of a formal complaint must always be given **in writing**.
- The EA to the Principal needs to mark the complaint as resolved.

## 6. Appeals Process

### Criteria for Reviewing an Appeal

The Principal/Chair of Governors will consider:

- Whether the complaint procedures were followed correctly.
- Whether the investigation was thorough and the judgements reasonable.

They may:

- Request further investigation
- Request changes to proposed actions

They should:

- Acknowledge the appeal within **three working days**.
- Review how the complaint was handled
- Review all communications and notes
- They may decide to convene a meeting with:
  - the investigating manager
  - the Principal
  - one other Governor

### Possible Outcomes of an Appeal:

- **If procedures were followed and aims met:** The appeal is not upheld.
- **If procedures were not followed or aims not met:** The appeal is upheld. The Chair /Principal may ask for further investigation or resolution work.
- The Chair/Principal will aim to notify the complainant of the appeal outcome within **ten working days** of receiving the appeal letter.

Ends./