Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure

Issue:	V1
Issue Date	July 2026
Review Date	July 2027
Applies to	All employees, agency staff, volunteers, contractors and anyone working under the direction of the school.
School type	Independent special school
Location	Kent County Council
Ratified date	28/07/2026
Review cycle:	Annually

Headteacher / DSL	Victoria Early V Early	**Date: 28/07/2026**

Introduction

OMG School Kent (OMG) is committed to providing the best possible service. However, we recognise that sometimes young people, parents/carers or other people will feel that they have cause to complain about the service they have received.

The importance of compliments regarding the services that we offer must also not be underestimated. Compliments allow us to see where we are excelling, how our community feels about us, and where groups and individuals are delivering a high-quality service.

We encourage all feedback from young people, parents/carers or other people associated with our provision, including complaints and compliments, and have developed this Complaints and Compliments Policy and an associated Complaints Procedure to address this issue. This policy explains our broad approach to handling all complaints. Our Complaints Procedure provides clear information on how individual complaints will be handled. Please note that OMG employees should refer to the Employee Handbook for information and guidance relating to staff grievances.

Aims

OMG aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly, and effectively. We will endeavour to:

- Put things right quickly for our complainants when they go wrong.
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of their complaint and the results of any investigation.
- Learn from each complaint to improve future performance.
- Set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor the performance against these targets.
- Advise young people, parents/carers or other people accessing our services of their right to complain to a third party if applicable (if they remain dissatisfied after their complaint has been through all stages of the internal Complaints Procedure)

Implementation

OMG's Complaints and Compliments Policy and associated procedure will be readily available to all young people, parents/carers or other people accessing our services. Together, these documents will detail how to make a complaint and the response timescales to be expected from OMG.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when a young person, parent/carer or other person accessing our services tells us that they are not happy with something that we have done or not done and that we have not put things right.

What is a compliment?

A compliment is when a young person, parent/carer or other person accessing our services tells us that they are happy with something that we have done and that they are happy with the service that we have delivered.

Complaints Procedure: How can a complaint be made?

Any young person, parent/carer or other person accessing our services wishing to make a complaint can do so in person, by phone, by email, or by letter. For written complaints, please write to the proprietor, Jalmat Miah, at: OMG School Kent, 6–8 Overcliffe, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 0EF.

For telephone complaints, please call the Proprietor, Mr Jalmat Miah, on +44 208 1593838. For email complaints, please email Mr Jalmat Miah at j.miah@omg.school.

If you have a complaint about the Headteacher, you should direct it to the Chair of Governors, Mr Gary Macey. His email is g.macey@omg.school.

Compliments Procedure: How can a compliment be made?

Anyone wishing to compliment our services can do so in person, by phone, by email, or by letter using the same contact details as with the complaint procedure above.

Policy Statement

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. We recognise that a difficulty that is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and also to our school culture. We intend that parents and students should never feel – or be made to feel – that a complaint will be taken amiss or will adversely affect a student or his/her opportunities at the school. The policy, however, distinguishes between a concern or difficulty which can be resolved informally and a formal complaint which will require further investigation.

Stage 1: Informal Complaints

1. **Concerns**

Most concerns, where a parent/carer seeks intervention, reconsideration, or some other action to be taken, can be resolved informally. Examples might include dissatisfaction with some aspect of teaching, disciplinary matters or issues outside the classroom.

Parents/carers should raise the concern initially with the Class Teacher or the Headteacher of the school as appropriate. The school will ensure that informal complaints are resolved within 10 working days of being raised.

2. Unresolved concerns

A concern that has not been resolved by informal means within ten working days of receiving the complaint can be notified as a formal complaint under Stage 2 below.

3. Record of concerns

In the case of concerns raised under Stage 1 of this procedure, the only record of the concern and its resolution will be filed notes by the person dealing with the complaint and/or file correspondence between the person raising the concern and the respondent.

Stage 2: Formal Complaints

4. Notification

An unresolved concern under Stage 1, a complaint which needs investigation, or a more serious dissatisfaction with some aspect of the school's policies, procedures, management or administration should be set out in writing with full details and sent with all relevant documents and full contact details for the attention of the Headteacher of the school concerned, as appropriate (complaints regarding the Headteacher should go to Jalmat Miah, Proprietor). Should a formal written complaint be received by another member of school staff, this should be immediately passed to the Headteacher.

5. Acknowledgement

The complaint will be acknowledged in writing normally within 3 working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays. The acknowledgement will indicate the action that is being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.

6. Investigation and resolution

The Headteacher may deal with the matter personally or delegate a senior member of staff to act as an 'investigating officer'. The investigating officer may request additional information from the complainant and will fully investigate the issue. In most cases, the Headteacher or investigating officer will meet or speak with the parent/carer to discuss the matter.

7. Outcome

The aim is to inform any complainant of the outcome of an investigation and the resolution to the complaint within 15 working days from the receipt of the complaint. Please note that any complaint received during a School holiday or within 15 working days of the end of term or half term may take longer to resolve.

8. Record of complaints

Written records will be kept of any meetings and interviews held concerning the complaint.

9. Unresolved Complaints

Where the complainant is not satisfied with the school's response to their complaint, they may have their complaint considered by an independent Complaints Panel.

Stage 3 – Complaint Heard by the Complaints Panel

10. Request

A request for a complaint to be heard by a Complaints Panel (an appeal) must be made in writing and within ten (10) working days of the date of the school decision made at Stage 2.

11. Acknowledgement

Where an appeal is received, the school will, within three (3) working days, refer the matter to the non-executive director, who will act as clerk to the Complaints Panel. The clerk will acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the appeal within (three) 3 working days and inform the complainant of the steps involved in the process. The clerk will be the contact point for the complainant.

12. Panel Hearing

The clerk will aim to convene an Appeal Panel hearing as soon as possible, normally no later than 20 working days after receipt of the Stage 3 request.

13. Panel Membership

The panel will consist of two Managers (Head of Administration and Admissions, Operations Manager) who have not previously been involved in the complaint and one person independent of the management and running of the school (the process used for selecting the independent person will conform to relevant guidance). In deciding the make-up of the Panel, Directors need to try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of directors and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation. The panel will select its Chair.

14. The Remit of the Complaints Appeal Panel

The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.
- Recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The aim of the hearing, which will be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as informal as possible.

15. Attendance

The following are entitled to attend a hearing, submit written evidence and address the panel:

- the parents/carers and/or one representative
- the Headteacher and/or one representative
- Any other person whom the Complaints Panel considers to have a reasonable and just interest in the appeal and whose contribution would assist the panel in their decision-making

16. Evidence

All parties will be allowed to submit written evidence to the panel in support of their position, including:

- documents
- chronology and key dates
- written statements setting out further detail.

The panel will consider the evidence along with the initial submission.

All written evidence must be received by the clerk no later than (five) 5 working days in advance of the Panel Hearing. The clerk will distribute the evidence to all parties no later than (three) 3 working days in advance of the Panel Hearing.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Clerk:

The clerk would be the contact point for the complainant and be required to:

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing
- Meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing
- record the proceedings
- notify all parties of the panel's decisions

The Role of the Chair of the Panel:

The Chair of the Panel has a key role in ensuring that:

- The remit of the panel is explained to the parties, and each party has the opportunity to put their case without undue interruption
- the issues are addressed
- key findings of fact are made

- parents or others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease
- The hearing is conducted informally, with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy
- the panel is open-minded and acts independently;
- no member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- each side is given the opportunity to state its case and ask questions;
- written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises, it would be useful to allow all parties to consider and comment on it.

18. Decision

The panel will reach a decision and make any recommendations within ten (10) working days of the hearing. The decision reached is final.

19. Notification of the Panel's Decision

The panel's findings will be sent, in writing, by the clerk, to the parents/carers, the Directors, the Headteacher, and, where relevant, to the person complained about. The letter will state the reasons for the decision reached and any recommendations made by the panel. All relevant parties will be informed of the decisions.

20. Record Keeping

The school will keep a record of all appeals, decisions and recommendations of the Complaints Panel.

Please note that all correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.