



Falkner House Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Including the number of formal complaints in the last academic year (NURSERY – Y6 including the EYFS) DfE standard 7. This policy is available to parents on the website and on request.

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Introduction

For the purpose of this policy the term "parent" includes a person who has parental responsibility for a pupil and / or a person who has care of a pupil.

Falkner House has always prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents of pupils do have a concern or complaint they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. For the purposes of this policy, any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy or concerned and seeks action is deemed to be a 'complaint'. The complaints policy applies to past pupils if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was registered.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except that they would be made available to the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required in the course of an inspection conducted under s.109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or where any other legal obligation requires disclosure.

Please note that working days are defined as Monday – Friday within term time – term dates being published on the Falkner House website.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their pupil's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, he/she will consult the Headteacher.
- Complaints made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Headteacher deems it appropriate for her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Headteacher will make a written record of all significant complaints and the date on which they were received. This is kept within the appropriate Falkner House Complaints Register and is retained for seven years. Should the matter not be resolved within seven working days or in the event that the Headteacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.



Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- During term time the Headteacher will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by speaking to the parents concerned, within three working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. During the holidays, the school will, whenever possible, keep to this timetable. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations which will be carried out within five working days.
- The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headteacher 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; this will happen within fifteen working days of the formal complaint being acknowledged. The Headteacher will also give reasons for her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they should write to the Headteacher and the Bursar, requesting a panel hearing.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons none of whom have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of whom is independent. The independent panel member will not be involved in the management or running of the school and will not have had any prior involvement in the matters complained about. The Panel members shall be appointed by the Partners.
- The Panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as reasonably practicable and within ten working days.
- 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 two working days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may attend and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person e.g relative, friend or advisor. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 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 and agree a timescale within ten working days. Following consideration of all relevant evidence, the Panel will make findings and recommendations. The Panel will write to or email the parents (and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the complaint) within five working days of the Hearing informing them of its decision together with the reasons for that decision. Copies of the findings and recommendations will also be given to the Headteacher and proprietors and retained in accordance with the school's records retention schedule and policy. The decision of the Complaints Panel is final and concludes the school's internal complaints procedure. Hea

Suspensions/exclusions

Appeals relating to suspensions/exclusions will be handled in accordance with the procedures set out in the school's Behaviour Policy. Such matters will not normally be considered under the Complaints Policy unless the complaint concerns the manner in which the process was conducted.

External Complaints

If parents believe that the school is not meeting the Independent School Standards, they may raise their concerns with the Department for Education. The Department does not normally investigate or determine individual complaints but may consider concerns as part of its regulatory oversight of independent schools and may request inspection activity where appropriate.

Data Protection

Any complaint relating to the school's handling of personal data will be handled in accordance with the school's data protection obligations and applicable legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and any subsequent applicable legislation.

Individuals who have concerns about how their personal data has been collected, used, stored, or shared by the school should submit their complaint in writing to the Bursar who is the school's designated Data Protection Lead.

The school will facilitate the making of data protection complaints and investigate them without undue delay. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within ten working days and will aim to provide a substantive response within one calendar month. Where permitted by law and where a complaint is complex or received during a period of school closure, the school may extend the response period by up to a further two calendar months. The complainant will be informed within the initial one-month period of the reasons for the delay and the expected date of response.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they will be advised of their right to escalate the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).



Records and Monitoring

- A confidential written record of all formal complaints with the date on which they were received (Falkner House Complaints Register) and details of whether they were resolved at Stage 2 or proceeded to a Panel hearing is kept for at least seven years together with action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- 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.
- The Board monitors the number and type of complaints received and the operation of the procedures set out in this policy. They also review the policy at least annually to ensure it meets statutory requirements and continues to reflect best practice.

Number of formal complaints

Over the course of the previous academic year (2024/25), there have been no Stage 2 or 3 complaints.

EYFS (Nursery and Reception)

Falkner House will investigate any written complaint relating to its fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint. The school will maintain a written record of all complaints and their outcome relating to its EYFS provision. This record will be made available to Ofsted and inspectors on request and retained for at least seven years.

Parents of children in the EYFS may contact Ofsted – enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk 0300 123 4666 or the relevant inspection authority if they believe the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements.