

Complaints Policy & Procedures

Last Review: June 2024

Next Review: By the end of the Summer Term 2026. Extended to end of Autumn Term 2026

Committee: Inclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the [DfE Guidance](#) and alongside the JCoSS Home/School Agreement signed by all parents and students on admission to the school.

Introduction

The school's aim at all times is to work in partnership with parents for the benefit of students. We set high standards for all members of the community, but inevitably there will sometimes be things about which parents, students or others in the community may disagree with the school.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage, and JCoSS is committed to this approach. Many issues can be resolved without the need for formal procedures. The school takes informal concerns seriously and aims to resolve matters quickly; however, in some circumstances complainants may wish, or may be asked, to raise their concerns formally by means of the school's formal complaints procedure.

Procedure for making a complaint

Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. The JCoSS complaints procedure has four stages, detailed below, which are appropriate to most situations. On occasion it may be appropriate to vary the way a concern is handled, and as far as possible this will be done with agreement on all sides. The aim in all circumstances is to resolve issues speedily and fairly.

Stage 1	A concern is raised informally with a member of staff
Stage 2	Where matters remain unresolved or are serious, they are passed to a member of the Middle or Senior Leadership Team
Stage 3	Where matters still remain unresolved or are more serious, they are passed to the Headteacher, who may delegate investigation to a member of the Senior Leadership Team
Stage 4	Where no resolution can be reached within the school, a formal complaint may be made to the Governing Body.

Concerns are best dealt with as soon as possible. The school endeavours to acknowledge all contact within two school days. Resolution of issues may take longer if they require investigation or discussion with others. Other than in serious or complicated cases, this should not exceed 2 weeks at each stage of the complaints procedure and will usually be much shorter. Concerns raised more than 12 weeks after an alleged incident may not be investigated. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the school. At all stages, email or phone correspondence is regarded in the same way as hard copy.

Stage 1: Concern raised with a member of staff

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often be resolved by a quick response. Guidance on the best way to do this is regularly circulated to parents and is summarised as follows:

JCoSS values our partnership with parents, and staff are happy to discuss the best ways forward for individual students. The best point of contact varies according to the nature of the query, as set out on the chart below, but concerns may sometimes be handed to other colleagues to resolve. Senior staff will become involved as necessary at later stages but there is no need to involve them or copy them in at the first point of enquiry.

Nature of query	Person/dept to contact	E-Mail address
<i>Progress/behaviour in an individual subject</i>	<i>Subject teacher</i>	<i>admin@jcross.barnet.sch.uk</i>
<i>Progress or behaviour in several subjects</i>	<i>Form tutor/Head of Year</i>	
<i>Students' wellbeing or family circumstances</i>	<i>Form tutor/Head of Year</i>	
<i>Incidents and issues outside lessons</i>	<i>Form tutor/Head of Year</i>	
<i>Payments</i>	<i>Finance Office</i>	
<i>Examinations</i>	<i>Exams Office</i>	<i>exams@jcross.barnet.sch.uk</i>
<i>JCoSS coaches</i>	<i>Transport Officer</i>	<i>transport@jcross.barnet.sch.uk</i>
<i>All other enquiries</i>	<i>Main Office</i>	<i>admin@jcross.barnet.sch.uk</i>

The vast majority of concerns are satisfactorily dealt with in this informal way.

Stage 2: Consideration by Middle or Senior Leadership

If matters are not resolved by Stage 1, or are more serious in nature, the member of staff or parent may refer them to the member of staff's line manager at Middle or Senior Leader level. The name of the line manager is obtainable from the School Office.

At this stage the complaint must be set out in writing, giving full details and with all relevant documents and addressed to the Middle or Senior Leader, via the school office using the admin@ email address. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two school days of receiving it. In many cases this response will also report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue, however, if the issue requires complex investigation it may take up to five school days. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further. The aim is to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Stage 3: Consideration by the Headteacher

If matters are still unresolved by Stage 2, or if they are of sufficient seriousness, the member of Senior/Middle Leadership or the parent may refer them to the Headteacher, who may:

- investigate further or delegate investigation to a Deputy Head or other senior leader
- convene a meeting with parents to discuss matters further, including the student and any relevant members of staff as appropriate
- unless agreed otherwise, write formally to parents setting out the outcome of the discussion and the resolution of the concern

Stage 4: Consideration by the Governing Board

If matters remain unresolved by Stage 3, or involve allegations against the Headteacher, they may be referred to the Governing Board as a formal complaint.

This is done by writing to the Chair of Governors via the School Office giving full details of what has happened and what would be necessary, in the complainant's view, to resolve matters. The Chair or a nominated Governor will investigate the complaint and may request a meeting with the complainant. Unless agreed otherwise, the Chair or other nominated Governor will write formally to set out the outcome of the investigation and the resolution of the concern.

If the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, both the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will always be informed, and the Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. If the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Board, that member will be informed.

If a complainant remains dissatisfied, the matter may be referred to a panel of Governors, who have not been involved in the case at any previous stage. The Governors appeal hearing is the last stage of the complaints process. Parents of students with EHCPs have additional recourse via the Local Authority, but are equally able to raise concerns in accordance with this policy and it is generally more appropriate for them to do so. All parents have a statutory right to make complaints to Ofsted or to the Department for Education, following procedures set out on their websites.