



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL

Complaint Policy and Procedures

BASKERVILLE SCHOOL - COMPLAINTS POLICY

Date reviewed: August 2025

Next review: August 2026

Approved by: Governing Body

Contact Details:

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VISION STATEMENT

At Baskerville School, we work together to create a place where every student can grow, learn to do things on their own, and reach their goals. We celebrate what makes each person unique while helping them learn to communicate, make friends, and develop life skills. Through our teaching, therapy support, and working with families, we help students become confident people who are ready for their future.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Baskerville School is committed to providing excellent education and care for all our pupils. We value feedback from parents, carers, pupils, and members of our school community, and we take all concerns and complaints seriously.

This policy is designed to:

- Enable concerns to be raised and resolved quickly
- Provide clear procedures that are accessible to all
- Ensure fair treatment and due process
- Promote continuous improvement
- Comply with statutory requirements and national guidance

2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all complaints about the provision of community facilities or services by Baskerville School, except those covered by separate statutory procedures.

Who can make a complaint?

- Parents and carers of registered pupils
- Pupils themselves (with appropriate support where needed)
- Members of the public
- Third parties acting with appropriate consent

3. COMPLAINTS EXCLUDED FROM THIS POLICY

The following complaints are handled under separate statutory procedures:

Type of Complaint	Contact/Process
Admissions	Local Authority School Admissions Team Contact your local authority for details
Special Educational Needs	Local Authority SEND Team Contact your local authority for details
Statutory Assessments	As above
Exclusions	Independent Review Panel www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions
Whistleblowing	Internal procedures or Department for Education www.education.gov.uk/contactus
Staff Grievances	Internal HR procedures
Staff Conduct/Capability	Internal disciplinary procedures

Type of Complaint	Contact/Process
Child Protection	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Contact your local authority for details
National Curriculum Content	Department for Education www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Note: If other agencies are investigating aspects of a complaint (police, local authority, tribunals), this may affect our ability to adhere to timescales or may result in the procedure being suspended until investigations are complete.

4. CONCERNS vs COMPLAINTS

Concern

An expression of worry or doubt where reassurance is sought. Most concerns can be resolved informally through discussion with the appropriate staff member.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction about actions taken or lack of action, requiring formal investigation.

We encourage informal resolution wherever possible before progressing to formal complaints procedures.

5. HOW TO RAISE CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

Informal Concerns

- Speak to your child's class teacher
- Contact the Head Teacher
- Call or email the school office

Formal Complaints

Complaints can be made:

- In person
- In writing (using the complaint form or by letter/email)
- By telephone
- Through a third party with appropriate consent

Important Contact Information:

- **General complaints:** Head Teacher via school office
- **Complaints about the Head Teacher:** Chair of Governors via school office (marked "Private and Confidential")
- **Complaints about governors:** Clerk to Governors via school office (marked "Private and Confidential")

6. COMPLAINT HANDLING PRINCIPLES

- **Accessibility:** We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure everyone can access our complaints procedure
 - **Confidentiality:** We will maintain confidentiality while ensuring thorough investigation
 - **Impartiality:** Investigations will be conducted fairly and without bias
 - **Timeliness:** We will respond within specified timeframes
 - **Record Keeping:** We will maintain appropriate records in line with GDPR requirements
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7. TIMESCALES

- Complaints must be raised within **three months** of the incident
 - Complaints about a series of incidents must be raised within **three months** of the last incident
 - We may consider complaints outside this timeframe in exceptional circumstances
 - Complaints received during holidays will be deemed received on the first school day of term
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8. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1: Investigation by Head Teacher

Process:

1. Submit complaint in writing (preferably using complaint form)
2. Head Teacher acknowledges receipt within **5 school days**
3. Head Teacher investigates and responds within **15 school days**
4. If Head Teacher cannot meet deadline, complainant receives update and revised date

Investigation will include:

- Clarifying the exact nature of the complaint
- Interviewing relevant parties
- Reviewing relevant documentation
- Identifying desired outcomes

Possible Outcomes:

- Complaint upheld (wholly or in part)
- Complaint not upheld
- Recommendations for improvement
- Actions to resolve the complaint

Special Circumstances: If the complaint concerns the Head Teacher, a skilled governor will handle Stage 1.

Stage 2: Governing Body Complaints Panel

When to use: If complainant remains dissatisfied with Stage 1 outcome

Process:

1. Request escalation in writing within **20 school days** of Stage 1 response
2. Clerk acknowledges receipt within **5 school days**
3. Panel meeting convened within **20 school days** of Stage 2 request
4. Panel decision communicated within **5 school days** of meeting

Panel Composition:

- Three governors with no prior involvement
- Independent members if insufficient school governors available
- Chair elected by panel members

Meeting Process:

- Written submissions circulated **5 school days** before meeting
 - Complainant may attend with support person
 - School representatives present their case
 - Panel considers all evidence
 - Decision made and communicated in writing
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9. RESOLUTION OUTCOMES

When complaints are upheld, we may offer:

- Explanation and/or apology
 - Action plan for improvement
 - Policy review
 - Staff training
 - Changes to procedures
 - Other appropriate remedial action
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10. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

We do not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will determine whether the complaint warrants investigation based on:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
 - The credibility of the concern
 - The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources
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11. VEXATIOUS OR REPEATED COMPLAINTS

We reserve the right to:

- Limit contact methods for persistent complainants
 - Refuse to investigate repeated complaints without new evidence
 - Seek legal advice where appropriate
 - Consider other appropriate measures where complaints become unreasonable
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12. WITHDRAWAL OF COMPLAINTS

If a complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing. We may continue to investigate if we believe it is in the public interest to do so.

13. NEXT STEPS - DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

If complainants believe the school has:

- Failed to follow its published complaints procedure
- Acted unlawfully or unreasonably under education law
- Failed to comply with statutory duties

They may contact the Department for Education:

Online: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Post: Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Note: The DfE will not reinvestigate complaints or overturn decisions, but will consider whether proper procedures were followed.

14. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body
 - Complaints data is reported to governors termly
 - Trends and patterns are analysed for school improvement
 - The policy is updated to reflect changes in legislation and guidance
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15. RELATED POLICIES

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - SEN and Inclusion Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
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16. COMPLAINT FORM

Personal Details:

- Name: _____
- Address: _____
- Telephone: _____
- Email: _____
- Student name (if relevant): _____
- Relationship to student: _____

Complaint Details:

- Nature of complaint: _____
- Date(s) of incident(s): _____
- Staff members involved: _____
- Previous discussions: _____
- Desired outcome: _____
- Supporting evidence attached: Yes/No

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Declaration: I confirm that the information provided is accurate and I understand the complaints procedure.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only:

- Date received: _____
 - Acknowledged by: _____ Date: _____
 - Stage 1 investigator: _____
 - Response date: _____
 - Complaint referred to: _____
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17. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Complainant Responsibilities

- Explain the complaint clearly and early
- Cooperate with the investigation
- Respond promptly to requests for information
- Treat all parties with respect
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate

Investigator Responsibilities

- Conduct fair and thorough investigations
- Interview relevant parties
- Keep detailed records
- Provide comprehensive reports
- Maintain impartiality throughout

Complaints Coordinator Responsibilities

- Ensure complainants are updated at each stage
- Coordinate between parties

- Maintain records
- Provide support where needed

Governing Body Responsibilities

- Ensure policy compliance
- Provide oversight of complaints trends
- Make final decisions at Stage 2
- Learn from complaints to improve services

This policy has been developed in line with:

- Department for Education guidance on school complaints procedures
- The Education Act 2002
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Equality Act 2010