



CHARTERHOUSE
ALMATY

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. Policy Statement

Charterhouse Almaty is committed to maintaining an open, respectful and transparent partnership with all parents. The school recognises that, on occasion, concerns or misunderstandings may arise, and it is important that these are addressed promptly, fairly and with dignity for all parties.

This policy outlines how parents may raise complaints relating to their own or their child's experience at Charterhouse Almaty, and how those concerns will be managed. The school will treat all complaints seriously and ensure that a clear and structured process is followed at each stage. Complaints will be handled sensitively, kept confidential within legal requirements, and resolved as quickly as possible while securing a fair outcome for the student and family.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Charterhouse Almaty provides a clear, accessible and consistent framework through which parents may raise concerns;
- complaints are handled impartially, respectfully and without prejudice;
- every effort is made to resolve matters informally at the earliest opportunity;
- formal complaints are investigated thoroughly, with accurate records kept and appropriate follow-up actions taken;
- parents understand how matters may be escalated if they remain dissatisfied after each stage;
- the school continues to learn from complaints, using them to strengthen practice and improve the experience of students and families.

3. Practice and Procedures

3.1 Overview of scope

This procedure is for use by parents and legal guardians of current students. It does not apply to prospective parents or to complaints raised after a student has left the school. Written records will be kept of all formal complaints, including dates, key discussions and the eventual outcome.

The school will consider complaints raised *within three months* of the event in question. Complaints submitted outside this timeframe will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Complaints made during school holidays will be treated as being received on the first school day of the following term.

3.2 Stage 1: Informal Resolution

In most cases, concerns can be resolved informally *within seven days* through conversation and clarification. Parents are encouraged to raise concerns initially with the most appropriate member of staff. This is usually the Class Teacher (Junior School), House Tutor (Senior School), Head of Junior School or Head of Senior School. In such instances, the appropriate member of staff will listen carefully, investigate as needed and propose a way forward.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, or if the parent feels that informal resolution is not appropriate given the nature of the matter, the parent may proceed to Stage 2.

3.3 Stage 2: Formal Complaint to the Head

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the informal stage, the parent should write formally to the Head. The written complaint should outline the nature of the concern, the reasons the parent remains dissatisfied, and the resolution sought.

Upon receipt, the Head will acknowledge the complaint, *normally within seven days*. The Head may then conduct further enquiries, meet with the parents or staff involved, and will keep a written record of meetings and decisions.

A written response will be provided *within 14 days*, explaining the outcome and any actions to be taken. If the complaint concerns the Head, the matter may be referred directly to the General Director, who will manage the investigation and respond within a similar timeframe.

If the parent remains dissatisfied after receiving the Stage 2 outcome, they may request a Stage 3 Review Panel.

3.4 Stage 3: Review Panel

A request for a review must be submitted in writing by the parent *within seven days* of receiving the Stage 2 decision. The request should explain why the parent remains dissatisfied and the outcome they seek.

A Review Panel will then be convened, comprising at least three members of the Advisory Board not previously involved in the matter.

The Review Panel will meet as soon as reasonably practicable, *normally within 14 days*, and the complainant/s will be invited to attend this meeting.

The hearing will be private, and notes will be taken. Parents may be accompanied by a friend, although not by a legal representative, consistent with the procedure of our parent school, Charterhouse, UK. The Panel will consider all documentation submitted in advance and may request additional information where necessary.

Following the hearing, the Panel will issue its decision, *normally within seven days*. The decision of the Review Panel is final.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping

The school maintains accurate and confidential records of all formal complaints, which include:

- the dates received;

- meetings or interviews conducted;
- investigations undertaken;
- the outcome and any follow-up actions.

A Complaints Log is also kept by the school, which details whether complaints were resolved at each stage and what actions were taken as a result.

All records are stored securely in accordance with the data protection procedures of the school and may be made available to external inspectors if required by law.

5. Staffing and Resources

The Head oversees the implementation of this procedure, supported by the General Director. All staff involved in receiving or managing complaints are provided with appropriate guidance.

Where a complaint concerns the conduct of a staff member, HR procedures may be followed concurrently.

Where a complaint concerns safeguarding or child protection, the matter will immediately be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and handled under those procedures.