



Educational Mission Statement: Barfield School will provide an outstanding educational experience of the highest quality, within a safe and stimulating environment.

Barfield has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated sympathetically and efficiently in line with this policy and resolved as soon as possible. Barfield will try to handle every concern or complaint in a positive way with the aim of resolving the issue(s) and, where necessary, the School's systems and procedures may be reviewed in light of the complaint.

Barfield wants to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction with any part of the School. Barfield recognises that a dissatisfaction that is not resolved quickly and fairly can cause resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and the School culture. Parents or pupils should never feel or be made to feel that a complaint would not be taken seriously or that it will affect a pupil's opportunities within the School.

Barfield feels this is good practice for all those concerned and helps promote the School's belief in safeguarding and welfare. This is a whole school policy, including the EYFS.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution:

Barfield hopes that most concerns or complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. If the complaint involves discrimination, harassment or victimisation these are taken very seriously and may need to be dealt with at Stage 2 – Formal Resolution, without action at Stage 1 – Informal Resolution.

If parents have a complaint they should contact their son/daughter's Key Person or Class Teacher (for Early Years - Y2) or Form Tutor (for Y3 - 8). In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means, to the parents' satisfaction. If the Key Person/Class Teacher/Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department/Head of Pre-Prep/Nursery Manager/Deputy Head or the Headmaster.

Complaints made directly to a Head of Department/Head of Pre-Prep/Nursery Manager/Deputy Head or the Headmaster will be referred to the relevant Key Person/Class Teacher/Form Tutor unless a Head of Department/Head of Pre-Prep/Nursery Manager/Deputy Head or the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

If the complaint is regarding financial issues, it should be put in writing and sent to the Finance Bursar, who will aim to respond within 5 working days.

The Key Person/Class Teacher/Form Tutor will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the dates on which they were received. A concern which has

not be resolved by informal means within 15 working days should then be put in writing and dealt with in accordance with Stage 2 – Formal Resolution.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution:

If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis under Stage 1, it should then be put in writing. This should provide full details of the complaint, include any relevant documentation, and be sent to the Headmaster (N.B. There may be occasions when a complaint at Stage 2 is dealt with by a member of the Senior Management Team). The Headmaster will consider the complaint and then decide on an appropriate course of action.

In most cases, the Headmaster will speak to the parents concerned, within 3 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. These records of complaints will be made available to ISI or Ofsted, on request.

Once the Headmaster 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, within 25 working days. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision and all written records relating to the complaint will be kept.

Please be aware that a complaint received close to the end of term is likely to take longer to resolve.

If parents are still not satisfied with the Headmaster's decision under Formal Resolution, a letter should be written to the Principal of the Cothill Trust (hereafter referred to as the Principal) within 5 working days of the Headmaster's decision, highlighting the complaint and Stage 3 of this procedure will commence.

Since February 2010 Barfield School has received seven complaints which have reached Stage 2. This is the point where informal discussions have not succeeded in providing a resolution and as such the concern has become a formal complaint.

Stage 3 – Consultation with the Principal:

If the complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 2, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Principal.

The Principal will meet with the parents to hear their complaint and consider any evidence, normally within 5 working days of receipt of their request for the Principal to consider the complaint.

The Principal will make a decision which will be communicated to the parents in writing. The Principal will give reason for his decision.

Stage 4 – Hearing before a Panel:

Should parents not be satisfied with the decision of the Principal, they should inform the Principal of this in writing.

The Principal will convene a panel consisting of three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom is independent of the management and running of the School about which the complaint has been made. The panel will consider the complaint and may make findings and/or recommendations.

If the parents wish, they may attend the panel hearing and may be accompanied by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation would not be appropriate.

Within five working days of the panel hearing, the chair of the panel will write to the parents, informing them of the panel's findings and any recommendations.

Findings and any recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise to the complainant and, where relevant, any person complained about. Findings and any recommendations will be available for inspection on the School premises from the Headmaster.

All complaints will be dealt with fully and completely within 28 working days of being raised.

Written records will be kept of all complaints including details of what stage they were resolved at for at least three years. Correspondence, statements and records relating to complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under the Education Act 2002 (as amended) requests access to them.

Parents may contact ISI or Ofsted if they wish to do so. The contact details are:

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

Ofsted:

The Secretary of State
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT