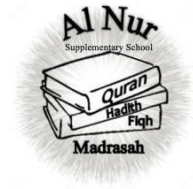




Bolton Muslim Welfare Trust Al Nur Supplementary School



This policy is in line with the Mission Statement of the school:

Bolton Muslim Welfare Trust Al Nur Supplementary School promotes and encourages the nurturing of Islamic Culture, which permeates all aspects of a Muslim's life through the sound development of conduct, appearance, and morals, which establish the highest ethical nature of Islam. We aim to establish a wholesome environment for female Muslim students, that is conducive to building character and strengthening British and Islamic values. The Supplementary School aims to prepare students to be confident, active and ethical people, serving their communities with a sound understanding of their faith and cultural heritage and fulfilling their roles as successful and responsible citizens in wider society.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

Ratified: September 2022

To be reviewed:

September 2023

Complaints and Grievance Policy

When a complaint about any aspect of school life is made, verbally / in person, on the telephone or in a letter, the following procedures are always carried out – whatever the issue:

1. Details of the complaint are noted on a complaints form (if a letter is not received).
2. Issues are discussed relating to the complaint with the parent and the Head Apa
3. The parent will sometimes be redirected to a member of staff to discuss the issues if this is preferable (but is assured that if necessary they can return to speak with the Head Apa).
4. At this point, depending on the nature of the complaint, the Head Apa may discuss the situation with the Chair of Trustees.
5. The Investigating Officer investigates all the information relating to the complaint
6. The Investigating Officer contacts the parent and discusses the results of the investigation.
7. In the event of the parent being unhappy with the findings or anything else relating to their complaint, they are informed of their right to present their complaint to the Chair of Trustees in writing.
8. The complainant needs to write to the Chair of Trustees giving details of the complaint. The Chair, or a nominated trustee, will convene a Trust complaints panel. The trustees appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process and is not convened to merely rubber-stamp previous decisions. Individual complaints would not be heard by the whole Trust at any stage, as this could compromise the impartiality of any panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint. The Trust may nominate a number of members with delegated powers to hear complaints at that stage and set out in terms of reference. These can include:
 - drawing up its procedures;
 - hearing individual appeals;
 - making recommendations on policy as a result of complaints.

The procedure adopted by the panel for hearing appeals would normally be part of the school's complaints procedure. The panel can be drawn from the nominated members and may consist of three or five people. The panel may choose their own chair.

9. The Remit of The Complaints Appeal Panel

The panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the school's system or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

There are several points which any trustee sitting on a complaints panel needs to remember:

- a. It is important that the appeal hearing is independent and impartial and that it is seen to be so. No trustee may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. In deciding the make-up of the panel, trustees need to try and ensure that it is a cross-section of the categories of trustee and sensitive to the issues of race, gender and religious affiliation.
- b. The aim of the hearing, which needs to be held in private, will always be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it has to be recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with outcome if the hearing does not find their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations which will satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously.
- c. An effective panel will acknowledge that many complainants feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting. Parents often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child. The panel chair will ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible. The layout of the room will set the tone and care is needed to ensure the setting is informal and not adversarial.
- d. Extra care needs to be taken when a complainant is a child. Careful considerations of the atmosphere and proceedings will ensure that the child does not feel intimidated. The panel needs to be aware of the views of the child and give them equal consideration to those of adults. Where the child's parent is the complainant, it would be helpful to give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the hearing, if any, the child needs to attend.
- e. The trustees sitting on the panel need to be aware of the complaints procedure.

10. The Role of the Clerk

The clerk would be the contact point for the complainant and be required to:

- set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing;
- meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing;
- record the proceedings;
- notify all parties of the panels' decision.

11. The Role of the Chair of the Trust or the Nominated Trustee

The nominated trustee role:

- check that the correct procedure has been followed;
- if a hearing is appropriate, notify the clerk to arrange the panel.

12. The Role of the Chair of the Panel

The Chair of the Panel has a key role, ensuring that:

- the remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption;
- their issues are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made;
- parents and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease;
- the hearing is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy;
- the panel is open minded and acting independently;
- no member of the panel has vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- each side is given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions;
- written material is seen by all parties. If a new issue arises it would be useful to give all parties the opportunity to consider and comment on it.

13. Notification of the Panel's Decision

The chair of the panel needs to ensure that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response; this is usually within a set deadline which is publicised in the procedure. The letter needs to explain if there are any further rights of appeal and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.

All complaints are dealt within a conciliatory manner as is possible. In this way it is hoped that a solution can be found which is acceptable to all parties and that only in the rarest cases will a complaint have to be dealt with by the Trustees of the school. It is acknowledged that the process is stressful not only to the staff of the school, but also to the person making the complaint.

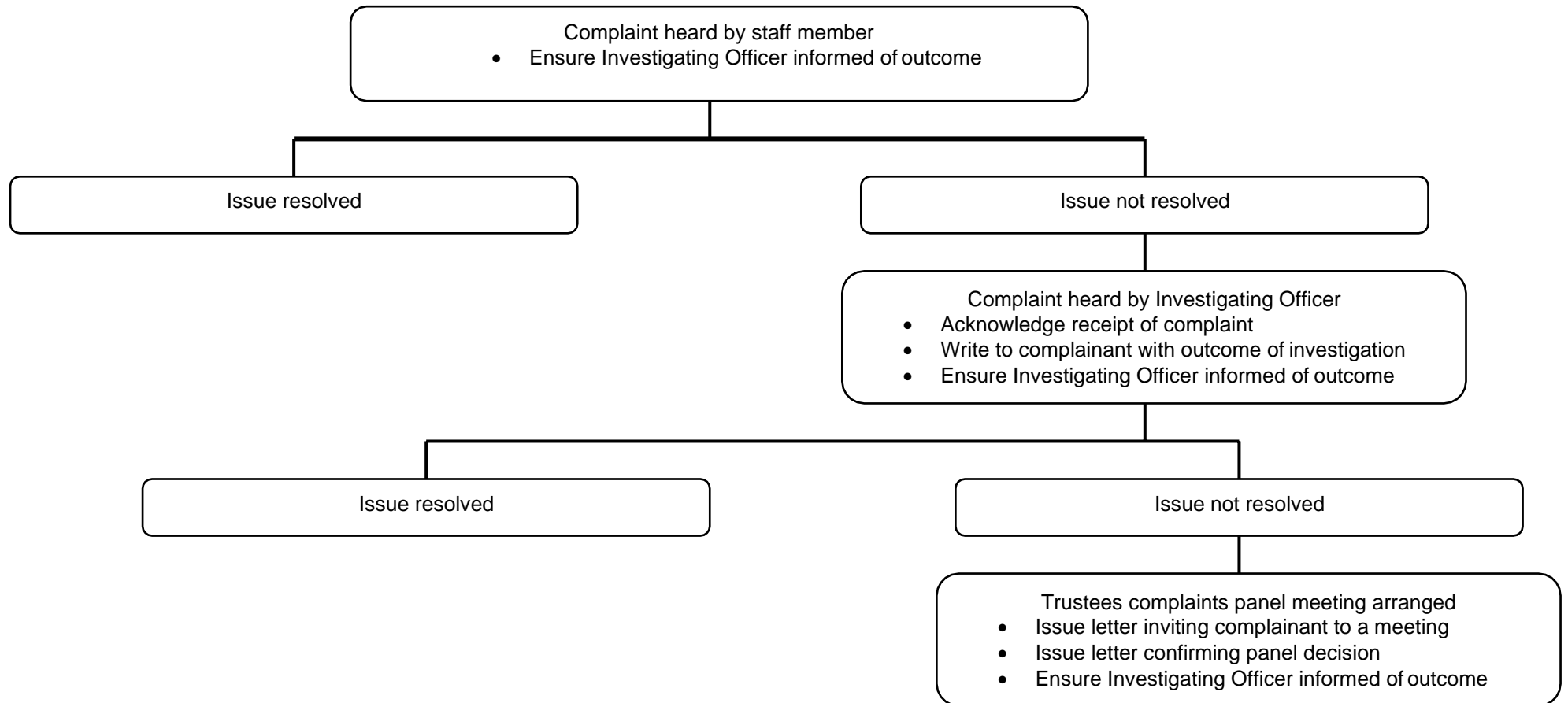
The investigation process is always time consuming and it is sometimes impossible to have reliable corroborative evidence which is wholly impartial. It is also made more difficult when another incident occurs which may appear similar to an earlier incident involving some or all of the same children when the earlier incident is brought up as evidence of a pattern. All incidents are treated in isolation unless the member of staff is sure there is a pattern emerging in which case appropriate action is taken.

Schools Complaint Procedure

Annex A

Flowchart

Summary of Dealing with Complaints



Example of a Complaint Form

Annex B

Please complete and return to the Head Apa, Tasnim Musa (complaints co-ordinator) who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: