



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 2025



Approved by: Mica Coleman Jones **Date:** 02.09.2025

Next review due by: 02.09.2026

Approved by trustees: 25.11.2026

**Signed by Chair of
Trustees**



FOREWORD

Lilya's Clarendon School and Lilya's Goldsmith School are both sites for Alternative Provision. Whilst neither site holds school status, they are often referred to as schools for the benefit of students.

AIMS

- Enable students, parents, carers, staff, and commissioners to voice a complaint relating to any aspect of their experience with the organisation.
- Attempt to resolve the issues or complaint at the earliest opportunity.
- Record and track any complaint to prompt action through a standardised approach.
- Facilitate a student's ultimate right of complaint to the awarding body, where appropriate.

PRINCIPLES

Wherever possible, anyone with a concern is encouraged to raise their concerns as soon as possible informally with a member of staff. Only if the complaint has been looking into but not satisfactorily resolved in the view of the complainant shall further procedures be started. At all stages, the person investigating the complaint should be a member of the management and should in no way be implicated in any possible way in the complaint.

Any person who would find it difficult to express their complaint coherently, either informally or in writing, will be supported with the process.

At all stages, detailed written record will be kept. All formal complaints are logged and recorded for future reference, with a record of satisfactory stage 2 completion or escalation to stage 3. A record is kept of all actions taken. All correspondence and records related to the complaint are kept confidential, with the exception of information requested by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required for Safeguarding reasons or for the purposes of an inspection. Details of individual complaints will be kept only for as long as is reasonably necessary under the terms of the GDPR.

STAGE 1 – INFORMAL CONCERN

Wherever possible, anyone with a concern or complaint is encouraged to raise this as soon as possible informally with a member of staff. This should be resolved within 10 days.

STAGE 2 – FORMAL COMPLAINT

If anyone wishes to make a formal complaint, they should do so in writing to the head of provision. If the complaint related to the Head of Provision, they should write to the Chair of Trustees.

Mica Coleman Jones, Head of Provision: mcolemanjones@lilyalighthousetrust.co.uk

Debra Costley, Chair of Trustees: dcostley@lilyalighthousetrust.co.uk

The head of provision or Chair of Trustees will act promptly to investigate the complaint thoroughly and objectively, meeting all persons involved so that their case may be put forward. They will inform all other persons involved of their decision following the meeting.

The complaint will be acknowledged by email or letter within three working days in term-time, and as soon as practicable in school holidays, and a decision will be notified to the complainant within 15 working days. If this falls wholly or partly within school holidays the timescale may be slightly extended.

The head of provision may ask a senior member of staff to act as investigator for a complaint about a member of staff. If the complaint is about the head of provision, the Chair of Trustees may ask a suitably skilled trustee to undertake the investigation.

The head of provision or Chair of Trustees will notify the complainant by telephone, email or letter of their decision and the reasons for it within 10 working days after acknowledging the complaint. Where there are exceptional circumstances resulting in a delay, the complainant will be notified of this and informed of the new timescales as soon as possible.

Any complaint received within one week of the end of a term or half term is likely to take longer to resolve due to potential unavailability of personnel required for the investigation to be undertaken properly.

Where the complaint is made against the Chair of Trustees, the Vice Chair should be contacted. The Vice Chair will decide for an independent person to investigate. The date of

the complaint and the name of the person complained about will be recorded, but neither the complaint nor any other details should be shared with other trustees as they may be called upon to act as witnesses to an investigation.

STAGE 3 – FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE TRUSTEES

If the parent or carer lodging the complaint is not satisfied with the stage 2 procedure, they should contact the Chair of the Trustees, though it should be noted that grounds for this should normally relate to factual inaccuracies or procedural errors rather than a disagreement with the outcome of the investigation of stage 2.

The Chair will investigate the complaint, allowing all parties concerned to put their points of view forward. This will take the form of a Hearing and will be conducted by a panel comprising three people who are not involved with the complaint. One of these people will be entirely independent from the running of Lilya's School. The parent or carer lodging the complaint may bring one person to support them at this Hearing.

The panel will not consider any new areas of complaint which have not been previously raised at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the complaint procedure. The panel is there to review the decisions taken after investigation of the complaint at Stage 2 only.

The role of the panel is to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made and to reach a decision, on the balance of probability, as to whether the complaint has been handled properly by considering:

- The documents provided by both parties; and
- Any representations made by the complainant and the trust.

The panel holds no powers to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, students or parents/carers. The panel may make recommendations on these matters or any other issues to the head of provision or Chair of Trustees, as appropriate.

Every effort will be made to hold the Hearing within 15 working days of the request, though it is unlikely that Hearings will take place in the school holidays.

The decision, findings and any recommendations will be provided to the complainant, and where relevant the person complained about, in writing by mail/email, normally within 5

working days of the hearing. The complainant will be asked whether they prefer to receive the decision by email or mail.

The decisions, findings and any recommendations will also be available for inspection by the Board of Trustees.