

# Complaints Policy

Reviewed	January 2024
Next Review Date	January 2025
Lead for Review	Principal

## Introduction

### POLICY AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a concern or complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level; and that the concern or complaint is resolved as soon as possible. We will try to resolve every concern or complaint in a positive way with the aim of putting right a matter which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing our systems and procedures considering the circumstances.

## POLICY STATEMENT

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. We recognise that a difficulty which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and to our culture. Teachers, staff, parents, and students should never feel—or be made to feel—that a complaint will be taken amiss or adversely affect a student or their opportunities at Leiths. This policy however distinguishes between a concern or difficulty which can be resolved informally (Stage 1) and a formal complaint which will require investigation (Stages 2 and 3).

Under the Provisions of the Child Protection Act it is necessary to make available to staff, students and parents a formal complaints procedure. This document is the formal complaints procedure and is available on Leiths website or by request from Leiths Reception. Students are made aware of the process during their induction.

A log of the number of complaints made in the last year, is available on request from the school office.

The Complaints Policy is a three-stage process, (informal, formal and panel hearing).

### Informal Complaints (Stage 1)

Any student, parent or guardian is encouraged to bring any concerns that they have to the notice of an appropriate person, for example Class Tutor, Headteacher, Teacher, Member of the Senior Leadership Team, Managing Director, or Principal. An appointment with a suitable representative of the school is normally available within 2 working days.

Every effort will be made to resolve issues at this informal stage. The ethos at Leiths is that we will always listen to, discuss and take seriously any issues brought to our attention. Formal records of informal complaints are rarely kept. Where it is perceived that there is a requirement to keep a record of correspondence and statements, the complaint will normally have escalated to being a formal complaint. Any correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential.

If the complaint has not been resolved by informal discussion, then it may be made into a formal complaint **in writing**, on completion of the Notification of an Official Complaint form. This form is available on the school website, from the school office, reception or from the Principal.

### Formal Complaints (Stage 2)

A formal complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days. If the formal complaint or concern cannot be resolved within 21 working days then the matter will be referred by the Principal or Headteacher or the person making the complaint if preferred to the Managing Director. They will then contact the person making the complaint, usually within 10 working days, to discuss the matter and review the information gathered and matters already discussed. They will keep a record of the complaint alongside any correspondence and statements, storing these confidentially. It is hoped that the Managing Director's investigation will bring about a resolution. The Managing Director will make a confidential written record of the discussion and a copy of this will be given to the person making the complaint, stating with a date that the matter has been resolved.

If there is no resolution of the formal complaint then the complaint can be referred by the Managing Director or the person making the complaint, as preferred, to a panel hearing. The panel hearing will take place within a further 10 working days.

### Panel-hearing (Stage 3)

The panel that will hear the complaint will be appointed on behalf of Leiths by the Board Chair. The panel will consist of at least two people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one panel member will be independent of the management and running of Leiths. The person making the complaint may attend the panel hearing and should they wish, be accompanied. The panel may conduct a further investigation and/or review the information provided by the Managing Director and/or the person making the complaint, including any statements provided. The panel will make findings and recommendations and ensure that these are provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about within 5 working days of the panel hearing having taken place. The report outlining the findings and recommendations will outline the reasons for the decision. The panel's findings and recommendations will be made available for inspection on the school premises.

Leiths does not undertake always to investigate an anonymous complaint, unless the nature of the complaint is particularly serious.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

Complaints will be considered only where a student is currently on roll.



### Notification of an Official Complaint

Name of person making the complaint*	
Contact details of the person making the complaint	
Date of the complaint	

<p>Please give details of the nature of the complaint</p>	
<p>How would you wish the complaint to be resolved?</p> <p>Please note that this cannot be guaranteed but will be considered when the complaint is investigated.</p>	

\* Please note that the College does not undertake investigations into complaints that are made anonymously.

This form, once completed, should be returned to the Principal: [Jenny.stringer@leiths.com](mailto:Jenny.stringer@leiths.com)

If the complaint is about the Principal, then please email it in confidence to the Managing Director; [Camilla.schneideman@leiths.com](mailto:Camilla.schneideman@leiths.com) who will forward it to the Board Chair.

We aim to investigate and resolve complaints within 3 weeks or 21 working days of receipt of the official complaint.