



MVS Complaints Policy

Date of issue:	September 2026
Renewal date:	September 2027
Individual Responsible	Magnus Bashaarat, Headmaster

Introduction

Maida Vale School will take every step to ensure the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided for its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure. This policy is made available to parents on the website, on MySchoolPortal and on request.

Formal and informal complaints regarding the Headmaster should be made to the Managing Director, Theo Brehony (theo.brehony@gardenerschools.com). Complaints against the Headmaster will also be addressed using the same three stage procedure.

There is no right of complaint once a student has been formally withdrawn from the school or left at the end of their academic year unless the complaint was raised whilst the child was at the school. No retrospective complaints will be entertained.

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with the complaint's procedure outlined below. If an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions is made against a member of staff, the procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education will be followed.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- Parents should contact their son/daughter's Personal Tutor, the Head of Department or the member of staff concerned. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway (within 48 hours) by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the member of staff cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult their Head of Department (HoD) or a Deputy Head. Parents are encouraged to make initial contact via email or verbally and staff will usually respond with a phone call or appointment time.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, the Deputy Head or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Personal Tutor unless the Head of Department, the Deputy Head or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. This will be determined by the nature of the complaint. Contact will be made within 24 hours from receipt of the initial complaint.
- The Personal Tutor, Teacher and/or Head of Department will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved or in the event of the personal tutor and parent failing to reach a satisfactory resolution within ten working days*, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents should put the complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- At Stage 2, the Headteacher will appoint an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team, normally a Deputy Head, to investigate the complaint, normally within five working days* of receiving the complaint. The Stage 2 investigator will then make a report of their findings to the Headteacher. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the person investigating to carry out further investigations.
- Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parents will be notified of this decision in writing,

within five working days of the initial meeting / conversation*. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should request to proceed to stage three of this procedure within 10 working days of that decision.

Stage 3 – Complaints Panel

- Provision will be made for a hearing before a panel. The target is for the panel hearing to take place within 10-15 working days.
- At least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint will be appointed by the school's proprietors to sit on the panel. One of these panel members will be independent of the management and running of the school. Where possible the independent person appointed will hold/ have held a position of responsibility comfortable with analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments.
- Parents will be invited to attend and be accompanied to a panel hearing if they wish. Parents should notify the school of the name of the person accompanying them, if applicable.
- The panel will make findings and recommendations. The panel will ensure that the complainant, proprietors, Headmaster and, where relevant, the person complained about, are given written copies of these or receive them by electronic mail. The findings and recommendations will be given to the relevant parties within five working days following the hearing and will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Headmaster.
- The whole formal resolution process should not normally take longer than 25 working days*. This period would be measured from the initial request for formal resolution to the issuing of the panel's findings and recommendations.

*Should the complaint be received just prior to or during a school holiday the procedure will commence upon the start of term unless the complaint relates to a safeguarding issue where it will be managed as soon as possible.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Written records will be kept of all complaints, their outcomes and the actions taken by the school for up to seven years, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, whether the complaint was submitted in writing or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.

- Once resolved whether the complaint is upheld, records of complaints at stages two and three including actions taken by the school will be kept for at least seven years.
- The school will record whether each complaint was resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.
- Parents are welcome to contact the school to request the number of formal complaints that there have been during the last three years.
- All correspondence, statements and records of complaints and their outcomes will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails. ISI may request records of all complaints made during a specified period and the actions taken because of each complaint.
- The school recognises the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication. We acknowledge your entitlement to complain, and we hope to work with you in the best

interests of the children whom you have placed in our care.

Complaints about the handling of personal data

1. This section applies to any complaint that the school has failed, or is failing, to comply with the UK GDPR or the Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to the complainant's personal data. It applies in addition to the stages set out above and takes precedence over them where there is any inconsistency.

2. A complaint under this section may be made by any data subject whose personal data the school processes. This includes students, parents, staff, governors, former students and staff, applicants, contractors and other third parties. It is not limited to parents of registered pupils.

3. Complaints under this section should be sent to the Managing Director (theo.brehony@gardenersschools.com), marked for the Managing Director's attention. A complaint may be made in writing or by email, and the school will accept a complaint however it is received. The complainant is not required to use a particular form of words, to raise the matter informally first, or to complete any earlier stage of this policy before complaining under this section. No time limit applies to making a complaint under this section.

4. The school will acknowledge a complaint under this section within 30 days of receiving it. Where the school can provide the outcome within that period, it will do so and a separate acknowledgement will not be sent.

5. The school will then, without undue delay, make appropriate enquiries into the subject matter of the complaint, take such steps as are appropriate to respond to it, and keep the complainant informed of progress. The school will inform the complainant of the outcome, explaining its conclusion in sufficient detail for the complainant to understand how it was reached and what action, if any, the school has taken or will take.

6. The complainant may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at any time, whether or not they have first complained to the school and whether or not the school's process has concluded. The ICO can be contacted at ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint or on 0303 123 1113.

7. The school keeps a record of each complaint made under this section, including the date and manner of receipt, the date and manner of acknowledgement, the enquiries and steps taken, and the outcome. These records are held by the DPO and may be requested by the Information Commissioner.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

- If you wish to make a complaint to the ISI about the school, you can write directly to:

Independent Schools Inspectorate,
CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London EC1A 9HA
Tel: 020 7600 0100
or email complaints@isi.net

You are advised that the ISI will rarely consider a complaint unless the school's formal complaints procedure has been followed fully prior to contacting them.

Contact details:

theo.brehony@gardenersschools.com or maria.gardener@gardenersschools.com

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints are treated seriously and confidentially.

This policy is available on the school website.

Complaints Log

Academic Year	No. of complaints
2024-25	0 formal complaints
2025-26	1 formal complaint