# Student Complaints Procedure

# AIMS

These pages explains the procedures to be followed when a student wishes to make a complaint about any matter concerning Brymore Academy. More general information about student complaints is contained in the ‘Student Complaints Policy’ which is available from Reception, school website and within the boarding house offices.

This document is laid out as a step-by-step guide. The exact path depends on the kind of complaint you are making and how serious it is. At every step you will be treated with respect, kept fully informed of progress in resolving your complaint and given the opportunity to have someone of your choosing to support you in all the meetings if you wish.

**STEP 1**: **Deciding what to do**

* Decide if making a complaint is the best way for you to get your problem resolved. Ask yourself the following questions:
* Could you solve the problem in any other way by talking to your Houseparent, class teacher, Form Tutor, Head of Year or someone else in school who may be able to resolve the concern / issue themselves or by speaking with another member of staff within the school?
* **If you or another child is in danger of being harmed it will be reported immediately to the schools designated safeguarding lead**
* If you decide to ask an individual member of staff to take up the matter but you are not satisfied with the results and you feel the issue is not yet resolved, you can still use the school's complaints procedure (**go to step 2**).

**STEP 2**: **If you have decided to make a complaint, what to do next**

* Choose the best person for you to talk to in the first instance. This could be any member of staff or person you feel comfortable talking to. This person should be someone you trust and who is approachable and friendly.
* Arrange an appointment to meet this person (called the First Contact in the rest of this document). Write down the details of the problem before you meet up (using the school complaints form). Don't worry if you can't do this (as they can complete when you meet), but it will help you to give him/her all the facts and you can always add more things as you remember them in the meeting.
* It is the school's policy that a confidential written record must be kept of this discussion. Your First Contact will ask you to check whether it is correct or if you would like to change or add anything. You will be asked to sign it and will be given a copy of this record.
* Hopefully your First Contact will be able to sort out the problem for you almost straight away. He/she must tell you within one school day of any progress or if more time is required. He/she will then give you an update within the next five school days.
* However, if your First Contact is not in a position to solve your complaint, he/she will inform you of this within 5 school days and explain the next step in the procedure and ask you if you want to follow that path (**go to step 3**).
* **If you or another child is in danger of being harmed it will be reported immediately to the schools designated safeguarding lead.**

**STEP 3**: **Taking the matter further**

Your First Contact will now be able to tell you which route he/she will have to take in order to solve the kind of problem you have described. The route to be followed will depend on which of the following situations applies to you:

* 1. **If you or another child is in danger of being harmed it will be reported immediately to the schools designated safeguarding lead**
  2. **Your complaint needs to be passed on to a more senior member of staff to be resolved**

This will mean that the Head of Boarding (HOB) or Assistant Head Teacher (AHT) (Pastoral) or another senior member of staff will have to be told of your complaint. However, your complaint will only be passed on to people who need to know about it so that it can be resolved. They will respect your need for privacy. Your First Contact will at this stage check with you that you want to continue with your complaint. The HOB or AHT will decide whether to deal with the matter him/herself or to report it to the Headteacher.

The people identified in 3.1 and 3.2 will want to talk to you to clarify your complaint and you can bring a friend, parent or another person to that meeting to help you if you wish. If necessary, an investigation will be carried out into your complaint. Depending on the subject of your complaint, the investigation may follow procedures laid out in other specific school policies, such as those on anti-bullying, behaviour management, substance abuse or child protection. If, after the investigation, there is still doubt as to what has happened and unable to be resolved, a hearing will be arranged with all those concerned in the complaint (**go to step 4).**

**STEP 4**: **What to expect at the hearing**

A hearing is a meeting at which all concerned are able to give their side of the story with the aim of coming to a fair decision. You will be able to bring a parent or friend with you and an impartial adviser to support you. The Headteacher will be the most senior person at this hearing. The hearing will be held within 10 working days of the end of step 3 being completed and decided that step 4 will be required, you will be informed in writing of the date and location of the hearing.

**STEP 5**: **What happens if you are still not satisfied?**

If the Headteacher is unable to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction at this hearing, you have the right to ask the school governors to hear your case.

A small group of governors will now review your complaint and the reports on all the discussions and any investigation that has taken place. Once again all those involved in the complaint will be asked to give their side of the story to the governors. The governors will make a fair decision based on all the evidence provided. Their decision is final. You will be provided an opportunity to give feedback using the complaints form once the complaint has been resolved regardless of which step it is resolved at.