Jeannine Manuel School
International understanding through a bilingual education

Complaints policy

Jeannine Manuel School

Approved by:	Bernard Manuel *Chairman of the Board*	**Date:** 9 October 2026
Last reviewed:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

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Introduction

This is a guide to the formal complaints policy and procedure. If you have a concern or a complaint about any aspect of school life, please contact an appropriate staff member as soon as possible. We will deal with any issue promptly and courteously.

This policy applies to all year groups at Jeannine Manuel School ("the School"), including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Note that this policy also applies to situations where an individual believes their personal data has been mishandled who should make a complaint to the school before the ICO.

The grievance procedure for staff to raise concerns is detailed separately.

Note that this policy is available on our website. Hard copies can also be provided upon request.

1. Stage 1: Informal Resolution

1.1. We hope that most complaints can be considered and resolved quickly and informally.

1.2. If parents / carers have a complaint, they should generally contact their child's teacher or principal teacher, whichever is most appropriate. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' / carers' satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the issue alone, they may need to consult the Head.

1.3. Complaints should only be made on behalf of parents' / carers' own child, not other people's children or groups of children.

1.4. The Head should be contacted for serious subject-related or general academic concerns or a pastoral or disciplinary matter.

1.5. In matters regarding finance, fees, and non-academic services, please get in touch with the Bursar.

1.6. If the complaint relates to or involves the Head, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Governors by writing to him: Mr Bernard Manuel c/o Clerk to the Governors, Jeannine Manuel School, 43-45 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DN.

1.7. We will do all we can to ensure that we respond to complaints highly professionally. However, if you feel that a staff member has not handled an expression of concern properly, please get in touch with the Head. Parents / carers are always welcome to address their serious concerns to the Head.

1.8. The staff concerned will make a written record of every complaint, including the date on which the complaint was received. We will endeavour to acknowledge an e-mail notification by telephone, e-mail or letter within five school days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the school holidays. Should the matter not be resolved within a reasonable period (one not usually exceeding two weeks) or if the relevant staff and the parents/ carers fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents / carers will be advised to proceed with the Formal Resolution procedure.

2. Stage 2: Formal Resolution

2.1. If you remain unhappy, please get in touch with the Head in writing, by letter or e-mail. The parents / carers should send full written details of the nature of the complaint, any relevant documents and full contact details to the Head, preferably by e-mail. It would be helpful if parents / carers could also indicate what they envisage as the desired outcome.

2.2. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, upon the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Head, or Division Head, will speak to and/or meet with the parents / carers concerned to discuss the matter, generally within ten school days of receiving the complaint, where a school day is defined as a day during the term when the school is in session. The Head, or Division Head, may be accompanied at this meeting, as may be appropriate in the circumstances. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the School to carry out further investigations, and members of staff or pupils involved may be interviewed. The Head may ask a senior staff member to act as an investigator and involve one or more of the Governors.

2.3. Written records of all meetings and interviews will be kept in relation to the complaint.

2.4. Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and parents/ carers will be informed of this decision in writing within ten school days. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.

2.5. If a complaint cannot be resolved at the Head’s level, then the complaint may be referred to a panel convened by the Chair of Governors.

3. Stage 3: Panels Procedure

3.1. The School takes complaints seriously and will strive to resolve any complaints to the complainant's satisfaction as soon as possible and with an open and fair approach. If having discussed the matter with the Head, you still feel dissatisfied, please contact the Chair of the Board of Governors directly or via the Clerk to the Governors no later than 365 days after the incident giving rise to the complaint.

3.2. The Chair of the Board of Governors (or a nominated governor) will convene a panel of at least two governors and one person independent of the management and running of the School to consider the complaint. No member of the committee may have any involvement with any matter detailed in the complaint. You can write to the Chair of the Board of Governors in confidence, and your request will be acknowledged within ten school days, and a date for the hearing will be arranged within a further ten school days.

3.3. Whenever possible, the panel will resolve the complaint immediately without further investigation. The panel will decide the appropriate course of action during their initial meeting to prevent any delays with the resolution of the complaint.

3.4. Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. If additional documents or information is required, copies will be supplied to the complainant at least two days before the hearing.

3.5. At the panel hearing, the complainant(s) may be accompanied by another person, e.g. a relative or friend. Legal representation will only be permitted if the panel chair considers it appropriate.

3.6. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision. It may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven school days of the meeting or hearing or as soon as reasonably practicable. The panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents / carers, the Chair of the Board of Governors, the Head and, where relevant, the person(s) about whom the complaint was made and will also be made available for inspection on the premises by the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Head. The panel will write to the parents / carers informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within seven school days of reaching this decision. The decision of the panel will be final.

3.7. Parents / carers can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements, and records relating to the individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Education and Skills Act requests access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

4. Dealing with persistent or unreasonable complaints

4.1. While we are committed to responding to all complaints with fairness and respect, we reserve the right to manage persistent or unreasonable complaints in line with Department for Education guidance (Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020, 2021).

4.2. A complaint may be considered persistent if it continues to be pursued after all stages of the complaints procedure have been exhausted. We may also deem a complainant's behaviour

unreasonable if it involves abusive language, repetitive or obsessive contact, or demands that place a significant burden on school resources.

4.3. In such cases, we may restrict contact (e.g. through a single point of communication or limiting the frequency of responses), or, in exceptional circumstances, bring further correspondence to a close.

4.4. New complaints or issues raised separately will always be considered on their own merits.

5. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

5.1. Parents / carers can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements, and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the School by paragraph 33(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards England) Regulations 2014; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

5.2. Written records of all formal complaints and their outcomes (including at what stage they were resolved) will be kept (for at least seven years where there are no safeguarding implications; where there is a safeguarding angle, records will be preserved for the term of the independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for ten years from the date of the allegation if it is longer) and reviewed at least annually by The Head, as appropriate. The written record should confirm any action the School took due to the complaint, regardless of whether it was upheld. The record will enable the School to identify whether a review or change in practice is needed so that patterns can be identified and appropriate intervention is made.

5.3. Records of Complaints Proceedings will be processed and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Further information can be found in the School's Data Protection and Retention of Records Policies.

5.4. Parents / carers may contact Ofsted if they do not believe the School meets the EYFS requirements.

Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

6. EYFS

6.1. Written complaints about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements must be investigated, and the complainant must be notified of the outcome within 28 days.

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7. Record of formal complaints

In the previous academic year (2025-2026), the school received no formal complaints.