Catch22 Independent Schools Policy

Complaints, compliments, and feedback

Catch22 Include Wales

Contents

1. What is the policy about? 2
2. Who does this policy apply to 2
3. Policy requirements 2
4. Definitions 7
5. Related policies 9
6. Appendices 9

Annex 1 – Equality Impact Assessment 9

This policy will be reviewed Annually.

Catch22 reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Policy Owner:	Andrew Preedy, Headteacher
Queries to:	Andrew Preedy, Headteacher
Date of last review:	August 2026
Date of next review:	August 2027
Catch22 group, entity, hub:	Catch22 Education
4Policies level (all staff or managers only)	All Catch22 Education staff

Document Version Control & Changes

Version	Last modified	By	Changes Made
1.0	25/05/2023	Nick Thatcher	Policy amended to reflect changes to Executive Principles and Strategic Director

1. What is the policy about?

This policy sets out the procedure of making a complaint for parents and carers of our pupils. The procedure explains the process and detail of complaints made at:

- Stage 1 – Informal resolution
- Stage 2 – Formal resolution
- Stage 3 – Panel hearing
- Complaints against Catch22

The policy reflects the requirements set out in the following: • School Complaints Procedures: Guidance (Welsh Government, updated March 2023) • Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024

2. Who does this policy apply to?

All Catch22 Education staff, pupils, parents/carers, volunteers, contractors, visitors, inspectors, and stakeholders.

3. Policy requirements

Catch22 welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and carers, and takes seriously concerns or complaints which may arise, as they can help us to improve the educational experience that we provide.

The aim of this procedure is to achieve a fair, effective and as rapid as possible resolution of parental concerns or suggestions about the education and/or welfare of individual pupils in the care of the school.

These procedures apply to all parents/carers of pupils and to prospective parent/carers of the school. A copy of this procedure is available on the school's website and can also be obtained on request from the school office or Headteacher.

Learners may raise concerns directly with a member of staff, teacher, Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. Support will be provided where learners require assistance making a complaint. Learners may be accompanied or represented by an advocate, parent, carer or appropriate adult.

Catch22 Include Wales recognises the rights of children under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and will ensure all complaints are handled in a manner that respects learners' rights, dignity and participation.

Any staff with concerns or suggestions should follow the procedures outlined within the whistleblowing policy.

Complainants must always be made aware of this complaints policy, of what stage their complaint is currently at, and the procedures of the complaints current stage should be made clear to complainants at each stage.

If a complaint involves an allegation against or naming an employee of Catch22, Catch22 or an agency worker engaged by the school then the following process must happen:

- A triage call involving the Headteacher, HR and the Executive headteacher must be arranged before any process is begun.
- A decision made whether the allegation meets the threshold to inform Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in accordance with Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- A decision on whether this policy or the Managing Allegations Policy is most appropriate policy to be followed.

Key contacts

School Address:

Newport – 12 Devon Place, Newport, NP20 4NN

Newtown, Ebbw Vale – Newtown Community Centre, Tre Newydd, Newtown, NP23 5FH

Operations Director, Education: Gemma Wall gemmalouise.wall@catch-22.org.uk

Executive Headteacher: Jamie Nielsen Jamie.nielsen@catch22.org.uk

Headteacher: Andrew Preedy Andrew.preedy@catch-22.org.uk

Deputy Headteacher: Karl Johansson karl.johansson@catch-22.org.uk

Assistant Headteachers:

Newport – Jodie Duggan Jodie.duggan@catch-22.org.uk

Newtown, Ebbw Vale – Hannah Sillman Hannah.sillman@catch-22.org.uk

Complaints Officer (Catch22): Complaints Officer Catch22

27 Pear Tree Street, London, EC1V 3AG

Feedback@catch-22.org.uk

Timing

Effective and fair resolution of concerns usually requires that they are brought to the school's and Catch22's attention promptly, which will normally be within three months of the relevant event(s).

Complaints may be heard after this time if the Director and/or Complaints Officer or Complaints Panel considers that the delay has not prejudiced an effective and fair resolution.

Professional judgment

Where the judgment of a member of Catch22 staff is subject to complaint, the Director and Complaints officer or Complaints Panel will determine whether the judgment was exercised fairly and reasonably according to Catch22 standards. There may be more than one fair and reasonable response to a situation.

The Complaints Officer or Complaints Panel will not normally substitute their decision for that of the staff concerned. Accordingly, where a complaint is upheld, the Director and Complaints Officer or Complaints Panel will usually make recommendations to be acted upon by the School.

Legal proceedings

Where legal proceedings exist between Catch22 and the parents/carers/pupil, this procedure may be subject to the constraints of legal process.

Record keeping

A written record of all complaints (which may include notes, correspondence and statements) will be kept at each stage of the procedure, as detailed below. This record will include details of whether individual complaints were resolved following a formal or informal procedure or proceeded to a panel hearing. Additionally, the record will include details of any action taken by the school as a result, regardless of whether or not they are upheld.

The written record of complaints will be reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and Catch22 Operations SLT. Records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them. The number of complaints recorded under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available to parents of students (and prospective students) on request from the Head's PA.

Mediation

At any stage of the process, it may be helpful to consider mediation, or a facilitated discussion by an experienced mediator, as a way to address any particularly difficult or sensitive issues as constructively as possible.

Staged Process

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is preferred that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
If parents/carers have a complaint they should normally contact the Headteacher/their child's Assistant Headteacher at the school site their child attends, as appropriate. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction.

If the Headteacher/ Assistant Headteacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult with other staff within the school. The Headteacher may facilitate a discussion between the complainant and a member of staff if they feel this would be the best route towards reaching a resolution.

The member of staff concerned will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received, and any action taken by the school as a result.

Should the matter not be resolved within 10 school days, or if the member of staff and the parent/carer fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

PART A

School Level

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher as soon as possible. The Headteacher (or their representative if the Headteacher is not in School) will investigate the complaint. The Headteacher will respond to the parents/carers within 10 school days.

The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. The school will also keep a written record of complaints, any action taken by the school as a result and whether they were resolved at the informal or formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.

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

Complaints about the Headteacher should be made directly to the Director or Chief Officer (see part B below).

PART B

Catch22 Level

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the Headteacher's response, they should write within 10 school

days of the Headteacher's response to the Director or Chief Officer, via the Complaints Officer of Catch22 at:

Email: Feedback@catch-22.org.uk

Complaints Officer Catch22

27 Pear Tree Street, London, EC1V 3AG

The complaint should clearly identify the main issue(s) of concern and, if possible, indicate the nature of the resolution they are seeking.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, the parents/carers should write directly to the Director of Catch22 via the Complaints Officer at the above email address or address. The complaint should clearly identify the main issue(s) of concern, and if possible, indicate the nature of the resolution that they are seeking.

In this situation the Director will inform the Chief Officer for Catch22.

The Director, in liaison with Chief Officer, will investigate the matter and will respond to the parents/carers within 15 school days of receiving the complaint. Written records will be kept of all complaints received, the steps taken to investigate the complaint and any action taken as a result.

In particularly complex cases, the Director will advise parents/carers of any extra time needed to investigate properly.

If a complaint is made directly to the Complaints Officer before a formal complaint has been made to the Headteacher, the Complaints Officer may refer the matter to the Headteacher for resolution.

If parents/carers are still not satisfied with the decision, they are able to proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure for matters which are within the responsibilities of the school, or of Catch22. Where the complaint is against the decision of an external agency or third party, such as an examination board or higher education institution, parents/carers will be advised on the appropriate route for their complaint and, where possible, given information and advice about progressing their concerns.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If parents/carers wish to have their complaint considered at a Panel Hearing, they should write to the Chief Executive of Catch22 at the address above, setting out their complaint. If a request for a Complaints Panel is made without the matter having previously been investigated by the Director, then the Chief Executive will refer the matter for investigation under Stage 2 of this procedure.

In the interests of resolving the complaint expeditiously, complaints should focus on the main issues. It is helpful if the complainant is able to indicate the nature of the outcome which they are seeking as a means of resolving their complaint.

Once a complaint has reached stage 3, The Chief Executive will convene a Complaints Panel but will not act as a Chair but will appoint one, normally a member of the Chief Officers Group. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of the panel.

The Clerk of the Panel will deal with administrative issues prior to the hearing. The Clerk will normally be

the Head of Governance & Risk, or their nominee.

The Panel may refuse to consider matters of which written notice has not been given if doing so appears to them likely to be prejudicial to a fair and effective consideration of the complaint.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to the Chair of the Panel no less than 5 school days prior to the hearing, for circulation to all parties.

The parents/carers, in special circumstances, may attend the hearing. They may be assisted by a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

Conduct of the hearing shall be at the Panel's discretion which will be exercised in the interests of a fair, effective, and appropriately rapid resolution of the complaint. The Chair of the Panel, or their Clerk, will normally write to the parents/carers before the hearing, having considered the nature of the complaint and the documentary material, to state how the hearing will be conducted. Prior to the hearing, decisions relating to procedure may be dealt with by the Chair of the Panel acting alone.

Should the parents/carers have any questions concerning the Panel's procedure, they should address them to the Chair of the Panel at the above address.

After due consideration of all relevant facts, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. The Panel will write to the parents normally within 5 working days informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings, and (if any) recommendations will also be sent in writing to the Headteacher, the Complaints Officer on behalf of the Chief Executive, and where relevant, the person(s) against whom the complaint was made.

The findings and recommendations referred to may be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

A copy of the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by The Senior Leadership Team (as proprietor) and the Headteacher.

Catch22's Complaints Officer will keep a copy of the findings and recommendations for all complaints which have been dealt with at a Panel hearing under this procedure.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection or where any other legal obligation prevails.

4. Definitions

N/A

5. Related policies

- Whistleblowing

- Managing allegations

6. Appendices

N/A

Annex 1: Equality Impact Assessment

This EIA is for:	Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy
EIA completed by:	Head of Governance & Risk
Date of assessment:	August 2023
Assessment approved by:	n/a

Catch22 is committed to always: avoiding the potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool for identifying whether or not strategies, projects, services, guidance, practices or policies have an adverse or positive impact on a particular group of people or equality group. Whilst currently only public bodies are legally required to complete EIA's under the Equality Act 2010, Catch22 has adopted the process in line with its commitment to continually improve our equality performance.

Policy owners are required to complete or review the assessment indicating whether the policy has a positive, neutral or negative impact for people who it applies to and who share one or more of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
Definitions are based on the Equality & Human Rights (EHRC) guidance.

Objectives and intended outcomes

This EIA has been completed in order to ensure that the implications and potential impact, positive and negative, of this policy have been fully considered and addressed, whether or not people share a protected characteristic.

Equality Area	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Please give details including any mitigation for negative impacts
Age Does this policy impact on any particular age groups or people of a certain age?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of age. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their age.
Disability Does this policy impact on people who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of any disability. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of any disability.
Gender reassignment (transsexual, transgender, trans) Does this policy impact on people who are transitioning from one gender to another (at any stage)	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their gender at any given time. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their gender.
Marriage and civil partnership Does this policy impact on people who are legally married or in a civil partnership?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of marital status. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their marital status.
Pregnancy and maternity (in work this is linked to maternity leave, non-work this is for 26 weeks after giving birth) Does this policy impact on people who are pregnant or in their maternity period	☐	☒	☐	It is not considered that the policy positive or negatively impacts on pregnant women or on staff on maternity or paternity leave.

following the birth of their child?				
Race Does this policy impact on people as defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their race, origin, colour or nationality. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Religion and belief Does this policy impact on people who practice a particular religion or none, or who hold particular religious or philosophical belief or none?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of religion or beliefs. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Sex Does this policy impact on people because they are male or female?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their sex. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their sex.
Sexual orientation Does this policy impact on people who are sexually attracted towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all staff and pupils regardless of their sexual orientation. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their sexual orientation.

More information/notes