|  |
| --- |
| Complaints & Allegations Policy & Procedure  |
|   |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Title**  |
| **Complaints Procedure** |
| Version Number | 1.4 |
| Policy Implementation Date | 23 SEP 2022 |
| Peregrinate Policy Manager | Angela Mollan, Chris Mollan |
| Approved by Senior Management | 23 SEP 2022 |
| Approving Signature | Angela Mollan |
| Policy Review Date | 28 March 2026 |

**INTRODUCTION**

This policy and procedure is for the benefit of Peregrinate Ltd. parents, guardians or carers. (Hereafter referred to as “parents”)

This policy and procedure applies in respect of all complaints by learners and/or parents made against Peregrinate Ltd., except in respect of child protection allegations where the Peregrinate Ltd. safeguarding policy and procedure applies.

Peregrinate Ltd. is committed to ensuring that all Peregrinate Ltd. students receive the best possible education in a safe, comfortable and enjoyable environment. It is keen to respond quickly to any problems and to remedy any defects as soon as possible.

Parents can be assured that all complaints and expressions of concern, whether raised informally or formally, will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails**.**

**Peregrinate Ltd. Complaints Procedure**

**Stage One - Informal Resolution**

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

 If parents or Peregrinate Ltd. students have a complaint, they should normally contact the Peregrinate Ltd. Operations Manager. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the students’ or parents’ satisfaction. If the Peregrinate Ltd. Operations Manager cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult other staff.

 The Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. These records will be kept for one year after the student has left Peregrinate Ltd.

 Peregrinate Ltd. will use it’s reasonable endeavours to resolve any informal complaints within ten working days of them being raised, except where they are raised in school holidays or within two working days of their commencement where Peregrinate Ltd. will use its reasonable endeavours to resolve them as soon as possible after commencement of the new school term (usually within ten working days).

 Should the matter not be resolved as referred to above, or in the event

that the Peregrinate Ltd. Operations Manager and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage Two of this Procedure.

**Stage Two - Formal Resolution**

 If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis as set out above, then parents should put their complaint in writing to the Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director. The complaint should be expressed clearly and courteously in writing.

 The Managing Director will investigate the complaint and will decide the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Managing Director will meet or speak with the parents concerned to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

 The Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director will use reasonable endeavours to speak to or meet parents within ten working days of the formal complaint being received, except where the complaint is received in school holidays or within two working days of their commencement where the Managing Director will use his/her reasonable endeavours to speak or meet with parents as soon as possible after the commencement of the new school term (usually within ten working days).

 The Managing Director will keep a written record of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

 Once the Managing Director is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made. Parents will be informed of this decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision. The written decision should be provided no later than ten working days after speaking or meeting with parents to discuss the matter. The Managing Director may also arrange to meet with parents to explain the decision.

 Where parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Managing Director’s response to their formal complaint, they have the opportunity to appeal to Peregrinate Ltd., and an impartial panel of the management team will review all of the investigation evidence. Parents may be accompanied to panel hearings if they wish.

**Stage Three – Appeal to the Peregrinate Ltd.**

 If the complaint cannot be resolved at stage two as set out above, then parents can appeal to the Peregrinate Ltd. The parents should put their appeal in writing.

 The Peregrinate Ltd. Independent panel of the management team will consider the appeal and will decide the appropriate course of action to take. The Peregrinate Ltd. representative will endeavour to meet the parents concerned to present his/her response.

 The Peregrinate Ltd. Representative will use reasonable endeavours to meet the parents within ten working days of the appeal being received, except where the appeal is received in school holidays or within two working days of their commencement where the Peregrinate Ltd. representative will use his/her reasonable endeavours to meet with parents as soon as possible after the commencement of the new school term (usually within ten working days).

**Stage Four - Independent Complaints Panel**.

 If parents seek to invoke Stage Four following the failure to reach an earlier resolution and the outcome of their appeal to the Peregrinate Ltd. representative, the parents may, in writing request that their complaint be further considered by an independent Complaints Panel set up for this purpose.

 Parents must lodge their appeal in writing and within ten working days of the date of the response to their appeal to the Peregrinate Ltd. representative. Their appeal should provide a list of their complaint(s) made against Peregrinate Ltd. and which they believe to have been resolved unsatisfactorily by the Stage Two Procedure, along with the remedies sought in respect of each. The Complaints Panel is only obliged to consider the complaint(s) lodged in this ‘initial submission’ although they may use their discretion to consider other relevant and related matters that may subsequently arise.

 Where an appeal is received by Peregrinate Ltd. , within five working days, the matter will be referred to the host school and/or local authority. Where the appeal is received by Peregrinate Ltd. during school holidays, or within two working days of their commencement, Peregrinate Ltd. has five working days upon commencement of the school term to refer the matter as above.

 Once an appeal has been received by the host school/local authority, they will acknowledge the appeal in writing within five working days, and will inform the parents of the steps involved in this Complaints Procedure. They will then endeavour to convene an independent Complaints Panel hearing as soon as possible to consider the matter, normally no later than twenty school days after receipt by Peregrinate Ltd. of parents’ written notice that they wish to invoke the Stage Four Procedure, dependent upon the availability of the external panel members.

 The following are entitled to attend a hearing, submit written representations and address the Panel:

(a) The parent/s;

(b) The Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director and/or one representative of the management of Peregrinate Ltd.: and

(c) Any other interested person whom the Complaints Panel considers to have a reasonable and just interest in the appeal and whose contribution would assist the Panel in their decision-making.

Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

 Where the Complaints Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. In such cases all parties will be given the opportunity to submit written evidence to the panel in support of their position, including:

(a) Documents in support of complaint(s),

(b) Chronology and key dates relating to complaint(s), and

(c) Written submission setting out the complaint(s) in more detail.

This evidence will be considered by the panel, along with the initial submission that was lodged by the parents.

 Evidence will be initially sent to the panel, who will then circulate the documentation to all parties, including the panel members, along with an order of proceedings. All written evidence must be received by Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director no later than ten working days in advance of the hearing. Peregrinate Ltd. will distribute the written evidence to the relevant parties no later than five working days in advance of the panel hearing.

 It is for the panel to decide how to conduct the proceedings of the appeal, which should be reasonably informal so that all parties can present their case effectively. If possible, the panel will resolve the parents’ complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out.

 After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision, and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten working days of the hearing. The decision reached by the Complaints Panel is final.

 Any decision reached that may have financial implications for Peregrinate Ltd. will need the appropriate approval from Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director, although any such approval must be compatible with the decision of the Complaints Panel.

 The panel’s findings will be sent by the host school and/or local authority in writing to the parents, Peregrinate Ltd. Managing Director and, where relevant, the person complained of. The letter will state any reasons for the decision reached and recommendations made by the Complaints Panel.

**Complaints Procedure Records**

 Peregrinate Ltd. will keep a written record of all formal complaints, including records of meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, and its decision.

 Peregrinate Ltd. will keep a written record of all appeals, decisions and recommendations of the Complaints Panel.

 All such records will be kept for one year after the relevant students have left the Peregrinate Ltd.