



CAPERNWRAY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Capernwray is committed to providing the best possible service to our students. However, if something goes wrong, we need to know about it to ensure that we are always improving our standards. The following information is intended to support anyone who feels the need to raise a concern or complaint.

Capernwray aims to handle complaints in a way which is sympathetic, fair, and efficient, which encourages informal conciliation, facilitates early resolution, maintains individual privacy and confidentiality, and permits useful feedback.

The initial response to a reported complaint is important. It is essential that all complainants are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A complainant should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting a complaint. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a complaint. Careful, non-judgmental listening, clarity about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, non-leading questions and only prompting where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. should all be practised.

A complaint will normally be about a problem encountered by a student, staff member or guest in connection with academic or other activities or services provided at Capernwray Hall. It will not necessarily be against anybody, whether a person or an institution, although some complaints may be against individuals.

Because the purpose of the complaints procedure is, if possible, to resolve problems, any complaint should be made promptly, in an attempt to resolve it as quickly and informally as possible.

For cases of very serious concern Capernwray also has a **Whistle-blowing Policy** which is intended to provide a means of making serious allegations about standards, conduct, financial irregularity or possible unlawful action in a way that will ensure confidentiality and protect those making such allegations in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so from being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged.

Stage 1 – Discussion and Advice

Normally the complainant would seek the advice of a member of staff, normally the Deans of Students or their Line Manager, or the Holidays and Volunteers Director, but could go to any staff member of their choosing. They can expect to be given guidance on how to proceed and an appropriate course of action, advice about what would constitute an appropriate remedy, and an opportunity to consider whether there is indeed a complaint to be addressed. In view of the nature of the ministry, this will involve considering the biblical principles involved and how the matter should be pursued. The complainant will then be in a position to decide whether to proceed further, and how. Part of this discussion will include a reiteration of the complaints policy so that the complainant is fully aware of the options available to them. The staff member consulted should make a dated note of any agreed outcomes for their own reference and in case this stage is referenced during any future proceedings.

Stage 2 – Informal Process

The complainant should if possible raise the complaint directly with the person responsible for the matter. It may not always be easy to do this if the complaint is about the conduct of this person: if for some reason the complainant cannot go direct to the person alone he or she should ask for someone else to be present, which could be a fellow student, staff member or guest, a family member or a supportive friend of their choice. If the complainant finds it impossible to raise the matter directly with the person responsible they should discuss it with another person in the department concerned who will communicate the complaint to the person involved. Once they have been made aware that an informal complaint has been made against them, that individual should inform their line manager. If possible, a suitable solution will be agreed upon and implemented, to solve the problem. Again, any staff members approached at this stage should make a dated note of any agreed outcomes for their own reference and in case this stage is referenced during any future proceedings.

Throughout this informal process the complaints policy should again be reiterated by anyone consulted, so that the complainant is fully aware of the options available to them. If they are dissatisfied with the outcome of such an informal process, he or she may consider whether to raise the matter formally through Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Formal Process

If dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal process, the complainant then raises the matter with the Bible School Principal (in the case of a student) or the Managing Director (in the case of a staff member or guest). The formal complaints procedure is implemented, as follows:

- i. The complainant puts the complaint in writing and sends it to the Managing Director, who will copy the complaint to the Chair of Trustees.
- ii. The Managing Director convenes a panel to hear the complaint. The panel's membership will be at their discretion but must include a member of the Senior Leadership Team, a trustee and include at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One panel member must be entirely independent of the management and running of the school.
- iii. Where the complainant is under 18 years of age a parent may attend the panel hearing if they so desire. Any complainant may, if they wish, be accompanied to the panel by a supportive friend of their choice.
- iv. The Managing Director will ensure that findings and recommendations are reached and recorded. These will be forwarded in writing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. These will be made available for inspection on the Capernwray premises by the trustees and members of the Senior Leadership Team only.
- v. The panel's decision will be final, with no leave to appeal.
- vi. This process will be completed within 28 working days of the receipt of the written complaint.

Capernwray will keep a full written record of all formal complaints, including any actions taken as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). Any correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to 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.

If, in relation to Capernwray Bible School, after using the Capernwray Complaints Procedure, you still wish to take things further, you can also access the complaints procedure of the British Accreditation Council, Capernwray's accrediting body. You will find details of how to do that [here](#).

References

- Staff Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- [British Accreditation Council](#)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- 'Searching screening and confiscation'
- 'UKCCIS sexting advice'
- www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

- <http://www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/>
- Sexual violence & sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Reviewed: November 2024

Next review due: October 2026