

Data Protection Complaints Procedure



The Cottesloe School

Policy Type:	Statutory
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Date:	Spring Term 2026
Approved by:	Full Governing Body - March 2026
Next review:	Spring Term 2027

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1. Introduction

The Cottesloe School is committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information. We take all concerns regarding the handling of data seriously. This policy outlines the process for individuals to raise a complaint if they believe the school has not complied with its obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) or the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints related to:

- Subject Access Requests (SARs) or other data subject rights.
- Misuse of personal data or unauthorised sharing.
- Data breaches or security lapses.
- Inaccurate record-keeping.
- Inadequate responses to privacy queries.

3. How to Raise a Concern

We encourage individuals to first raise any concerns informally with the school office. Often, issues can be resolved through a simple clarification. If an informal resolution is not possible, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing or by email to: office@cottesloe.bucks.sch.uk

To help the school investigate any complaints please provide the following information:

1. Name and contact details of the person making the complaint.
2. If the complaint is being made on behalf of others. The school will require proof of authority to act on the person's behalf before the school will start any investigation. This includes when the complaint is on behalf of a child who is considered to be competent to understand their own data rights. Proof of authority can be an appropriate power of attorney or a signed letter of authority from the person they are acting on behalf of.
3. Evidence or any supporting information required for the school to investigate the complaint

All complaints will be acknowledged within 30 days of receipt.

The complainant will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and complaint.

4. The Complaint Process

Stage	Action	Timeline
Stage 1: Acknowledgment	The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint.	Within 30 days

Stage 2: Investigation	The DPL (or a designated senior leader) will investigate the matter, reviewing logs, policies, and interviewing relevant staff.	Within 20 school days from acknowledgment of the complaint
Stage 3: Response	A formal written response will be issued outlining the findings and any remedial action taken.	Within 40 school days from acknowledging the complaint

Note: If the investigation is complex, the school may extend these timelines. We will notify the complainant in writing if an extension is required.

5. Resolution and Appeals

If the investigation finds that data was handled incorrectly, the school will take immediate steps to rectify the situation, which may include:

- Updating incorrect data.
- Strengthening technical security measures.
- Providing additional staff training.
- Formally apologising for the breach.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the school's response, they have the right to appeal to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors in writing within 15 school days from the date of the school's response. The Headteacher or the Chair of Governors will respond within 10 school days from the date of receipt.

6. External Recourse (The ICO)

If you are still not satisfied after following the school's internal complaints procedure as detailed in this document, you have the statutory right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

- Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>
- Helpline: 0303 123 1113

7. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with evolving data protection case law and ICO guidance.

Last Reviewed: February 2026

Next Review Date: February 2027