



Complaints Policy

Updated By: M Lees	Approved By: C Johnson	Date: Nov 2020
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1. Introduction

We take great care with the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to our pupils. However, if parents do wish to make a complaint they can expect the following procedure to apply.

2. Principals

The principles guiding the school's procedure for handling concerns or complaints are that it should:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible
- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to understand and use
- be impartial
- resolve issue at the earliest opportunity with established time-limits for action
- keep people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary.

3. Definition of a Complaint

For the purpose of this policy a complaint will be considered to be, 'any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school.'

3. Stage1 - Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved at this level to the parents' satisfaction.
- If the concern is about the child's class teacher, parents should contact the Head teacher. The Head teacher may refer the matter to a senior member of staff to resolve the issue.
- If the concern is about the Head teacher, parents should contact the Proprietor.
- Stage 1 complaints will be addressed within 5 working days from the point at which they are received.
- A written record of all complaints will be kept (regardless of whether they are upheld) and this will include the date on which the complaint was received, the action taken and the outcome.
- Should the matter not be resolved informally, then parents are able to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

4. Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If it has not been possible to resolve the complaint informally, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the headteacher. The letter should state:
 - the details of the complaint
 - the actions that have been taken so far to resolve the complaint
 - the actions desired to help resolve the complaint

- The Head teacher will meet with parents to discuss the complaint and then complete a full investigation of the complaint.
- The Head teacher will inform the parents of the of the complaint outcome in writing, including any remedial action taken.
- Stage 2 complaints will be addressed within 10 working days from the point at which they are received.
- A written record of all complaints will be kept (regardless of whether they are upheld) and this will include the date on which the complaint was received, the action taken and the outcome.
- It is expected that a resolution will be reached at this stage and that parents will feel assured that all of their concerns have been fully and fairly considered. If, in extreme circumstances, parents are not satisfied they are able to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 3 of this procedure.

5. Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing

- Where the parents are not satisfied with the response or process undertaken at Stage 2, the matter will be referred to a Complaints Panel.
- A formal letter of complaint should be addressed to the Governing Body asking that the matter is now examined by an independent panel. This letter should set out the nature of the initial complaint and why they feel it has not been properly dealt with.
- The Head teacher will acknowledge receipt of the Stage 3 complaint and will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 working days of receiving the Stage 3 complaint.
- The Complaints Panel will be appointed by the Governing Body and at least one of the three members shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The members of the Complaints Panel will have no connection to the pupil or the family concerned and will not have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- If the Chair of the Complaints Panel deems it necessary, she/he may require that further particulars of the complaint and any relevant documents or records be supplied in advance of the panel meeting. Copies of such particulars will be supplied to all the parties wherever practicable and not later than 3 working days prior to this hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation is not permitted. Recordings of hearings are not permitted.
- A written record of the proceedings will be taken.
- After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of their decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Headteacher and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made.
- A written record of all complaints will be kept (regardless of whether they are upheld) and this will include the date on which the complaint was received, the action taken and the outcome.
- It is not within the powers of the Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, pupils or parents. The Panel may make recommendations to the School on these matters or any other issues as appropriate.

- The decision of the Complaints Panel is Final.

6. Early Years

This policy is compliant with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where parents believe that the school is not fulfilling the requirements of the EYFS they are entitled to raise concerns with either ISI or Ofsted. All complaints relating to the EYFS are investigated and complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. All paperwork with regard to complaints to Ofsted will be kept by the school for 3 years.

7. Recording of Complaints

All complaints are duly recorded in the School Complaint Register, including the outcome of the individual complaint and any actions taken as a result

8. Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. The exceptions to confidentiality are the Secretary of State or an inspection body. The School will make available to an inspectorate on request a written record of any complaints made during a specified period and the action which was taken as a result.

9. Further Steps

If the parents remain dissatisfied with a decision made by the Complaints Panel they will be able to pursue their complaint with the Department for Education and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate who can be contacted at:

- **Department for Education**
Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, DL3 9BG.
- **Independent Schools Inspectorate**
CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, telephone 020 7600 0100.
- **Ofsted (EYFS concerns)**
National Business Unit, Royal Exchange Buildings, St. Ann's Square, Manchester M2 7LA, telephone 08456 404040.

10. Complaints addressed in 2020-2021

The school received 4 stage two complaint in 2020, following investigation 1 complaint was upheld.