



Complaints Procedure

Updated: September 2023

Written by – The Head.

This policy applies to all parents of pupils currently in the school including the EYFS (Reception).

EYFS Nursery has a separate policy.

Introduction

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

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

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Key Person/Class Teacher/Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Key Person/Class Teacher/Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head or the Head.

Complaints made directly to the Nursery Manager/Deputy Head/the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Key Person/Class Teacher/Tutor unless the Nursery Manager/Deputy Head/the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Key Person/Class Teacher/Tutor will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within one week (or other agreed period) or in the event that the Key Person/Class Teacher/Tutor and the parent 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

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head will contact the parents concerned, normally within 24 hours of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.

The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

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

In most cases, this will be within SEVEN working days. However, there are occasions when this may be longer, for example, when the complaint falls shortly before or in a school holiday.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach a resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors who is appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. 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 Governors on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen days.

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 all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within three days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, to the person about whom the complaint was made.

Record keeping

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

A written record will be kept of all complaints and whether they were resolved at the formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.

It is good practice to keep written action points from official and unofficial complaints. These will enable the school to improve wherever possible when things do not go as well as they should.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

If parents believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements they may contact Ofsted and ISI :

OFSTED Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk about schools 0300 123 4234, about concerns 0300 123 4666

ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, or concerns@isi.net. You can also contact the Department for Education [online](#) or on 0370 000 2288.

Number of recent complaints:

The number of formal complaints in the academic year 2022-23 was 4.

The number of informal complaints in the academic year 2022-23 was 1.

The number of formal complaints in the academic year 2023-24 is 0.

The number of informal complaints in the academic year 2023-24 is 3.

Appendix: Complaints Procedure – Independent Member of the Panel

The Chair of Governors will use his/her judgement to appoint suitable people, who, in the view of DfE would: 'be those who have held positions of responsibility and who are used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments/points. It would add credibility if independent panel members had some standing in the local community. In this connection serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools or people with a legal background would be suitable.'

Author	Governors & the Head Master
Policy initiated	Sept 2007
Review Frequency	Annual , as necessary
Latest reviews with changes made	September 2023 (complaint count updated May 2024)
Review due date	September 2024
References	