

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

## (INCLUDING EYFS)



### PURPOSE

To offer parents a means of communication to raise concerns and complaints. The school aims to have an effective complaints procedure that can diffuse problems and provide valuable feedback. It is hoped that most matters can be resolved at an informal level, but this procedure offers a formal structure, the stages of which are outlined below. It is stressed that parents should not in any way feel awkward about raising concerns or complaints. It is a necessary part of parent/teacher communication and will under no circumstances affect the position of the child. Any complaint will be treated in complete confidence. Parents must feel that they are welcome to discuss the progress of their complaint at any stage.

This document is intended as an outline for parents and applies to children who are registered with, or attending, the school at present. The Head has recourse to separate procedures for handling issues raised by members of staff and for staff performance issues not arising from parents' complaints.

### STAGE 1 – INFORMAL

Initially, parents should talk to the class teacher. It is best to make an appointment either before or after school. If the complaint does not relate to the class teacher, the matter will be referred to the relevant member of staff and an opportunity to meet with this member of staff will be provided.

In certain cases, parents may wish to go straight to the Head. However, the Head might not be able to respond until he has consulted the member of staff concerned.

After these initial discussions with the class teacher and, if appropriate, specialist subject teacher, if parents are still concerned and not satisfied with the outcome, they should arrange to have a meeting with the Head. The member of staff will be informed of the meeting, and if thought appropriate, may be asked to join the meeting at some point. Before the meeting, the Head should make every effort to do the necessary research to grasp the nature of the problem. Points raised by all parties and the action to be taken should be noted in writing by the Head. Within two school days the parents and member of staff concerned should be given a copy of this note. All parties should sign this note to confirm its accuracy.

## **STAGE 2 – FORMAL**

The parent must allow sufficient time for the action to take effect. If, however, after an appropriate and reasonable amount of time has passed and matters have not improved to the satisfaction of the parent, a formal, written complaint must be made to the Head. The Head will acknowledge the complaint in writing within two school days and arrange a second meeting within 10 days. It should be made clear that the parents and/or the member of staff concerned can be accompanied by a third party.

As a result of this meeting, a course of action will be decided upon by the Head. The details must be put in writing for all parties within two school days. If parents are still dissatisfied, the complaint must be directed to the Board of Governors via the Clerk to the Governors. At the same time, the Head should be notified in writing by the parents that a written complaint has been submitted to the Board.

All providers must investigate written complaints relating to their fulfillment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

## **STAGE 3 – PANEL HEARING**

Complaints will, it is hoped, only rarely reach this level. The Clerk to the Governors must acknowledge the letter within two school days. The Board will refer the complaint to a Governors' Complaints Panel, selected by the chair of governors. This panel may consist of the Chair of Governors himself or another appointed governor and two independent members: one from another school, and the other, a person familiar with the school, but not directly involved with it. If the Chair of Governors has been involved in the matter up to this point, it would be appropriate, in the interests of fairness for all sides, for another governor of the Board to sit on, and chair, the panel. The panel will convene within 20 school days of the written complaint being received. The parents are to be informed of the meeting date. The Chair of the panel is to gather all the necessary documentation and state clearly to all concerned what the purpose of the meeting is.

The meeting is to be minuted by the Clerk to the Governors. When the panel convenes, all parties, including the Head, will be given an opportunity to explain their position. The parents and the member of staff concerned may be accompanied to the meeting by one other person. The panel will then withdraw to discuss the issues in private. The panel members will attempt to achieve reconciliation between the school and the parent. The panel must submit their conclusion and recommendations in writing to all parties within two school days of the meeting and inform them of any vote taken if appropriate.

## **APPEAL TO THE GOVERNING BODY**

Parents have a right of appeal to the Board of Governors by submitting a letter to the Clerk to the Governors. The Board, except those member(s) who have already been involved, will meet within 20 school days of the letter being received. The Clerk to the Governors shall gather all necessary documentation and minute the meeting, but shall not take part in the discussion. The meeting will be chaired by the most senior officer not already involved in the matter. The Board can invite the parents, member of staff concerned and the Head to explain their position, if they consider this is necessary to enable them to come to a decision. The parties will be informed of the Board's decision within two school days of the meeting taking place.

## **EYFS**

The school will investigate written complaints relating to its fulfillment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaints will be made available to OFSTED on request.

If parents and/or carers believe the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements they can contact OFSTED via the contact details below.

## **CONTACTING OFSTED AND THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE (ISI)**

Parents can make a complaint to Ofsted and/or ISI should they so wish. Contact details for both these organisations can be found below or on their respective websites.

### **OFSTED:**

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

### **ISI**

CAP House  
9 - 12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9H

Tel: 020 7600 0100

Email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

## **COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE HEAD**

Any concern relating to the Head should be addressed directly to the Chair of the Governors. The review process as from stage 3 will be implemented.

## **PUPIL COMPLAINTS**

Children must always feel that their concerns and complaints are taken seriously. It is to be left to the discretion of the staff and the Head as to how complaints from children are handled. Reference will be made to the school's anti-bullying policy or other relevant policies. If a child is not content with the way a complaint has been dealt with then their parent(s) can follow the procedures outlined in this document

## **RECORDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The school will keep a record of complaints. This log will detail the date, the name of the child and the parents, and a summary of the issue raised. The record will indicate whether the complaint was resolved following a formal procedure, or whether it proceeded to a panel hearing, or what action was taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether or not it was upheld). 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. Complaints registered during the Early Years Foundation Stage period will be held on file for three years.

### **ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS**

If an anonymous complaint is received by the school, it will be recorded in the log. It is hoped that parents will not feel the need to make such a complaint. It is to be left to the Head's discretion as to what action is to be taken.

### **SUPPORT FOR STAFF**

Staff must feel reassured that the complaints procedure is designed to improve communication and must feel supported in the procedure. A member of staff is entitled to know about any complaint that may be damaging to his/her reputation.

### **NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS**

The number of formal complaints have been:

2012 – 2013	0 complaints
2013 – 2014	0 complaints
2014 – 2015	0 complaints
2015 – 2016	0 complaints
2016 – 2017	0 complaints