



Complaints Policy

Our school is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, consistent and accessible service to young people and their parents/carers. We always aim to provide high quality services for everyone, but accept that sometimes things do not always go to plan. In such circumstances, we want to know so that we can put them right and learn from our mistakes.

This complaints procedure, as required by law in paragraph 33 [Part 7 of the Independent School Standards]. This policy constitutes the school's formal Complaints Procedure. It will be displayed on the premises at all times.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally (Stage 1), without the need to invoke formal procedures (Stages 2 & 3). We take all concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve any matter raised, as quickly as possible.

Under normal circumstances, the principal will be responsible for managing complaints. If a complaint is made against the principal, the Trustees will conduct the investigation. All complaints made to staff will be recorded in detail in the Incident Record Book.

Procedure

Stage One

On occasion, a parent may raise a concern directly with school staff without any formality. At this stage, it may be unclear whether the parent is making a complaint, seeking information or has misunderstood a situation. Regardless of this, the school will aim to resolve the concern at this point in a speedy and effective way. However, if the concern is not resolved immediately and the parent confirms they wish the matter to be dealt with as a complaint, the opportunity to discuss the matter with an appropriate member of staff will be given e.g., Headteacher. In the case of a complaint against the Headteacher, the complainant should, whenever possible, discuss their concerns with the Headteacher in the first instance. However, should the complainant be unable to do this, then they may proceed directly to Stage 2 of the procedure by writing to the proprietor or trustees care of the school, marking the letter "Private and Confidential".

Stage Two

If parents or carers are not satisfied with the response at Stage 1, they should write formally to the Headteacher of the school. The Headteacher will investigate the complaint further and respond in writing within 10 working days of receiving the formal complaint in writing. Where further investigations are necessary that may exceed this period, amended times will be communicated with an explanation for the delay. If the complaint is against the Headteacher, the complaint should be addressed to the proprietor or trustees. The proprietor or trustees will investigate and respond within 20 working days of receiving the formal written complaint.

If a parent raises a complaint with a Trustee, then the Trustee should refer the complainant to the Headteacher or appropriate member of staff. The member of staff will discuss the issue with the parent and those involved in the school, with the aim of resolving the complaint as soon as possible. The parent will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation and what action, if any, the school proposes to take.

