



LYNDHURST HOUSE SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY Including EYFS

Introduction

The School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, it will be treated seriously. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is a complaint and is in the scope of this procedure, whatever the school labels it as. The School has the following procedure, which is for parents of all pupils including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Details for contacting Ofsted and ISI are given at the end of this policy, if parents believe the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

This complaints procedure applies to parents of current pupils; it also applies to past pupils if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered at the school. It does not cover exclusions (see Behaviour Policy), and does not apply to parents of prospective pupils.

This policy is available on the School website and is also available from the School Office, on request.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. All complaints and concerns will be responded to within two working days.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department / Deputy Head / Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department / Deputy Head / Headmaster may be referred to the relevant teacher unless the Head of Department / Deputy Head / Headmaster deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter directly.
- The Form Teacher will make a note of concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within two weeks, or in the event that the School and the parents fail to reach a resolution, the 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 to the Headmaster in writing. Although all formal complaints must be made in writing, this does not mean that the formal stage is automatically triggered whenever a concern is expressed in writing, for example by email. Complaints will usually only progress to the formal stage after first being considered at the preliminary stage and only then if the complainant intends to escalate a matter to the formal stage. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

- In most cases, the Headmaster will speak to and/or meet and/or write to the parents concerned, normally* within 5 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will make notes of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster 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 normally* within 10 working days of the complaint being received. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they will be referred to Governance who will constitute a complaints panel, which will consider the matter. This will be Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Panel Appeal

- 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 Governance. The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally* within 10 working 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.
- The parent(s) may attend the hearing and may be accompanied by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
- Should the panel make findings and recommendations, a copy of those findings and recommendations will be
 - (i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about;
 - (ii) available for inspection on the school premises by Governance and the Headmaster;
- 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 normally* complete within 20 working 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 raising the complaint, the Head and, if appropriate, the person complained of.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

RECORD KEEPING

The record of complaints, and whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, is kept for at least three years. The action taken by the school as a result (regardless of whether they are upheld) is also kept on record. The outcome of complaints made with regard to pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage must be made within 28 days of the complaint being received. The School must provide Ofsted and ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action that was taken as a result of each complaint.

ROLE OF GOVERNANCE

In addition to the involvement mentioned above, Governance ensures that all complaints are dealt with in an appropriate manner by regular checks of the complaints records, and with complaints being included on the agenda for meetings with Governance.

The number of formal complaints received in the previous year is available on request from the School Office. In the academic year 2018-2019 there were no formal complaints

Headmaster

July 2019

This policy is reviewed annually

To be reviewed: July 2020

* and ** see next page.

CONTACT DETAILS

If parents believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements, they may contact Ofsted and /or ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate)

Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester
M1 2WD;
General helpline 0300 123 1231;
Textphone number 0161 618 8524.

Independent Schools Inspectorate,
Ground Floor,
CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London
EC1A 9HA;
Telephone 020 7600 0100.

* It is anticipated that the normal timeframe should be sufficient in term time. Should a complaint be made outside of term time, resolution may depend on the availability of relevant members of staff. Should this be the case, parents will be informed and a clear timeframe established for each particular case.

** The DfE gives the following guidance on the identity of an independent panel member.

“Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force might be considered.”