



Park School for Girls

Complaints Procedure [including EYFS]

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the EYFS". In the case of this particular policy, in the light of the references under 'objectives' to 'every member of the school'

Introduction

The school has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. The following procedures are in place to deal with complaints. All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

This complaints procedure applies to the parents of pupils currently registered at Park School for Girls and to past pupils if the complaint was raised at the time that the pupil was still registered at the school. It also applies to the parents of prospective pupils.

A complaint is any matter which a parent of a pupil is unhappy about and seeks action by the school in order to redress. The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure that parents have the opportunity to raise any complaint that they may have, secure in the knowledge that it will be dealt with properly and fully. All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

This complaints procedure may only be invoked by a parent/guardian of a child in the school or by any other person liable for the payment of school fees in relation to a child in the school.

There are four stages to the process: the Informal Approach, the Formal Approach, Chair of Governors review and Panel Hearing. Each of these stages are described below.

Stage 1

Informal Approach

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

In the first instance if parents/guardians have a complaint or are concerned about an issue relating to their child's academic or pastoral well-being, including those children in the EYFS, they should normally contact their child's class teacher or form teacher. Parents should do this by telephone or e-mail; class teachers and form teachers who will acknowledge the communication by email or telephone within 48 hours, and then follow up on the concern raised, and seek to resolve the issue by meeting with the parents within 5 working days from when the issue was first raised.

A written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received will be made.

If this is not successful, then:

- Prep School parents should contact the Head of the Prep School
- Senior School parents should contact the Head of Department or the form tutor, and following that the relevant the Deputy Head

This second communication will be acknowledged by email or telephone within 48 hours, and the relevant member of staff will seek to resolve the issue. We will aim to resolve all concerns at Stage 1 within 10 working days from when the issue is first raised.

If there is concern about an issue other than academic or pastoral wellbeing parents should contact the Bursar, who would normally respond within 48 hours and aim to resolve the issue within 5 working days from when the issue is first raised.

Stage 2

Formal Approach

If the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved by Stage 1, then parents may lodge a formal complaint in writing to the Head, stating explicitly the wish to invoke the formal complaints procedure. This will be acknowledged within 48 hours by letter or email.

The Head will then commence an investigation into the complaint. The matter will be treated in as confidential a manner as possible. Discussions of the case will be limited to the Head, and those that need to be consulted. The Head may ask a senior member of staff to act as Investigator and / or may involve one or more members of the governing body.

The Head and/or Investigator may request additional information from parents and will probably wish to speak to parents personally and to others who have knowledge of the circumstances. Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews. The Head will inform any complainant of the outcome of the investigation and the resolution to the complaint within 15 working days from the receipt of the written Stage 2 complaint. The outcome will be communicated by letter.

Stage 3

Chair of Governors Review

We hope that any parent will judge that their complaint has been fully and fairly considered. However, if parents wish to invoke Stage 3 then they may, within 10 days, write to the Chair of Governors, Mr Smith, [care of the school] in his capacity as the Company Secretary of the Board of Governors, to request a review of the Head Teacher's decision. Parents/guardians should include all relevant documents with their written complaint.

As soon as practicable (and within 5 school days in any event) the Chair of Governors shall respond to the party making the complaint.

If the party making the complaint is dissatisfied with the response of the Chair of Governors, they may within 5 school days of the receipt of the Chair's response request the Chair in

September 2018

writing to convene a Complaints Panel to reconsider. The Panel will meet within 20, term time, working days of the receipt of the Stage 3 complaint.

Stage 4

The Panel Hearing

If parents wish to invoke Stage 4 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred by the Chair of Governors to the Complaints Panel to reconsider.

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. The Chair of the Panel, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 5 school days. The Panel hearing will normally take place at the school premises, or, at the direction of the Chair of the Panel, at a nearby independent venue.

Those present at the hearing will normally be:

- Members of the Panel
- The Head and any appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Other relevant school staff
- The Complainant
- Panel Secretary [An independent Clerk]
- Any other person at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel, for all or part of the meeting.

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

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 2 school days prior to the hearing.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

The proceedings will be conducted in an informal manner. They will not be recorded by using any kind of audio device, but the Secretary will keep minutes of the main points that arise. All present will be entitled to write and retain their own notes. The meeting will be directed at all times by the Chair of the Panel who will ensure that all those present have the opportunity of asking questions and making comments.

All those present are expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners. The Chair may at their discretion adjourn or terminate the meeting.

Each of the issues raised in the letter of complaint will be considered and discussed.

If the Panel considers that further investigation is required, it will decide how it should be carried out.

After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make findings and recommendations, which it shall complete within 3 school days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the complainants informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainants and, where relevant, the person of whom the complaint relates. The panel's findings and recommendations are available for inspection on the school premises by the governing body and the head teacher.

The Panel's findings and recommendations will be final.

Note 1

If a complaint is received during the week preceding a school holiday the time limits in this policy will run from the first day of the next term or half term period.

Note 2

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

Note 3

A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, and at what stage they were resolved; noting whether they were resolved at the Formal Approach or whether they proceeded to a Panel Hearing. A record is also kept of the outcome of the complaints and of the recommendations and actions taken by the school as a result of the complaints considered, [arising from a panel hearing] regardless of whether they were upheld. The record will be retained for a minimum of 3 years after the child has left the school.

A separate record will be kept summarising complaints which were dealt with at the Informal Stage.

Note 4 – Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

If the school receives a complaint from a parent/guardian relating to the schools' EYFS provision (Reception Class at Park School), the complaint must be investigated and the complainants notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of that complaint being received in writing. The record of the complaint must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

The parents/guardians of children at Park School, including those in the Reception Class (EYFS), are entitled to contact the Independent School Inspectorate and/or Ofsted, if they believe that the school is not meeting the EYFS Regulatory Requirements. Contact details are below:

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

Address CAP House

September 2018

9 – 12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

Telephone 020 7600 0100
Email info@isi.net

Ofsted

Address Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Telephone 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0300 123 3159
Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Website www.ofsted.gov.uk

The school acknowledges its obligation to provide both Ofsted and ISI with details of complaints for any given period and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

Complaints regarding the Head Teacher

Parents/guardians should write, meet with or speak to her directly.

Should they be dissatisfied with the Head Teacher's response then they should proceed to Stage 3 of the complaints procedure – Chair's review.

Complaints regarding Admissions

Parents should write, meet with or speak to the Head Teacher. Should they be dissatisfied with the Head Teacher's decision then they should proceed to Stage 3 of the complaints procedure – Chair's review.

Financial Matters

Should a parent or guardian have any concern, no matter how small, regarding payment of fees etc. the Bursar should be contacted in the first instance. Should the matter not be resolved then it should be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher. In the event of it being unresolved at these two levels then concerns should be expressed in writing to the Board of Governors. Complaints will be dealt with at the next scheduled Finance Committee meeting following the receipt of the written complaint. The committee will respond to the complainant within 5 school days of their decision.

Complaints made during a school holiday or half-term holiday that necessitate action by the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors at the formal stages will be dealt with as soon as practical and will not follow the normal timescale.

September 2018

Number of Formal Complaints 2016 - 2017	Resolved Successfully
1	Yes

Park School

Devised by Mrs Nicholas and approved by the Chair of Governors

October 2016

Revised by the Head Teacher

Mrs A Nicholas

September 2018

Approved by Chair of Governors

Mr Smith

September 2018

Date for review

September 2019