

The Shrubbery School



A Policy for Complaints

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A Policy for Complaints

Introduction

Parents are always very welcome at The Shrubbery School to make appointments with class teachers, Head Teacher Mrs Atkins, and Deputy Head Mrs Duckworth. Appointments for mutually convenient times can be arranged with the school office in person or by telephone on 0121 351 1582. We invite contact with parents and see the education of your children as a joint venture between home and school.

The Complaints Policy is for parents across the school from EYFS up to Year 6.

The Complaints Policy does not apply to any child protection issues as there are separate procedures for that; nor to children who may have been excluded. It also does not apply to children who are no longer pupils of the school unless the complaint was raised while the child was still on role at the school.

If you do have a complaint rather than a query the following complaints procedure is open to you. It provides guidelines for handling concerns and complaints and is drafted in accordance with Part 7 of Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Certain parts of the procedures can only be carried out during term time

Records of complaints, and the actions taken to resolve them, have to be to be stored for three years.

Complaints can be recorded in writing or by email. They can also be received verbally and then written up.

A. Informal Complaints

All complaints are initially dealt with informally and usually concern the parent and class teacher. It can also be that an informal complaint is made to the Head Teacher or Deputy

Written complaints should usually be resolved within 48 hours of the informal complaint being made. However if issues are more complicated this could extend to five working days. Working days are Monday to Friday in term time. School term dates are issued on the school website.

Such complaints may be:

- a) A complaint by a parent about a member of staff (re work, homework, behaviour etc)
 - There would then be a conversation between the Head/Deputy and the parent.
 - The Head/Deputy would discuss issues with the member of staff concerned.
 - Parents and Head/Deputy would meet with the member of staff

- The outcome or action on the points raised would be decided and recorded.
- A review would be conducted at a point decided by Head/Deputy, member of staff and parents.

b) A complaint by a parent about the actions of another child.

- It is essential the class teacher is part of the conversation.
- If the issue is to do with the playground then duty staff and lunchtime supervisors need to be informed to observe.
- If the issue is in class then all teachers involved with the children are asked to observe.
- Children spoken to and conflict resolution negotiated if applicable.
- Parents with complaint met with and explanations or procedures put in place explained.
- Class teachers and supervisors monitor any conflict.
- If the issue is seen as bullying then policy will be followed (see our 'Anti-Bullying Policy')
- Where necessary the school's Positive Behaviour Policy will be employed.

c) Complaint by a member of staff about a staff member

- This can be made to the Head Teacher formally or informally. If this is a safeguarding issue staff are expected to follow the 'Whistleblowing' procedures in the school Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff are spoken to by the Head Teacher to try and avoid friction and resolve issues.
- During Performance Management issues between staff may be raised that must be tactfully resolved to maintain a happy working environment.
- If the complaint is about the Head Teacher then the Governors and Proprietor should be informed. If this is a safeguarding issue then again the 'Whistleblowing' procedure in the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.

d) Complaint by local resident

- These complaints should be dealt with in a polite manner and issues such as parking should be investigated.
- Follow up contact with action taken should take place.

B. Formal Complaints

If parents feel an informal complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory way then a formal complaint should be made in writing or in person to the Head Teacher or to the Deputy Head.

The Head Teacher will meet with parents and establish all the clear facts surrounding the issue. The Head Teacher will then set out in writing the schools response to the complaint and the reasons for the response. This will be done within five school days, except in the case of holiday time when it may be necessary to leave the issue until the first day back at school.

C. Unsatisfactory Conclusions

If parents feel a formal complaint about an event, a procedure or a member of staff has not been dealt with in a fair unbiased way by the Head or Deputy then the following route is open to them:

A formal letter of complaint can now be addressed to the Head and Governing Body asking that the matter is now examined by an independent panel. This letter should set out the nature of the initial complaint and why they feel it has not been properly dealt with.

The independent panel is made up of three people independent of the running and management of the school entrusted with dealing fairly with any serious complaint.

The Shrubbery School will organise three such people ready to act in this capacity should the need arise. They will not have been directly involved in any stage of the complaints procedure until this stage.

At the meeting of this panel parents will be invited to attend with, if they wish, a representative of their choice. There will be a clear timescale provided e.g. giving plenty of notice for the convening of the panel meeting. Parents will also be clearly given a timescale for any events that follow as recommendations from the panel.

All participants in the complaints procedure will receive written copies of the panel's recommendations following the hearing of the formal complaint. They will ensure that parents, staff involved, proprietors and Head and Deputy receive copies of their findings and recommendations.

A Complaints Panel Hearing is a review of the decisions taken by the Head or Chairman of Governors (in circumstances where the formal complaint concerns the Head) The Complaints Panel will not consider any new areas of complaint that have not been previously raised and addressed under Stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

The role of the Complaints Panel is to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made by considering: the documents provided

by both parties; and any representations made by the Parents and the Head and to reach a decision on an appropriate recommendation.

It is not within the powers of the Complaints Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, pupils or parents. The Complaints Panel may make recommendations to the School on these matters or any other issues as appropriate.

D. Records of Complaints

Records of any complaints informal or formal and how they are resolved must be recorded in writing.

Copies of such complaints and recommendations remain confidential but must be made available to Ofsted and for any School Registration procedure. This ensures the school is dealing with issues fairly.

Schools are required to publish the complaints dealt with in a formal capacity over the last year.

At The Shrubbery in the school year 2017-2018 there were none in this capacity.

In Appendix 1 the contact information for ISA (Independent School's Association) and for ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) is given.

E. Appendix 1

Contact details:

ISI

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House

9 - 12 Long Lane

London

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