

Complaints Procedure for parents in Early Years, Foundation Stage, Boarders and Day Girls.

Introduction

The quality of our teaching, pastoral care and community life enables us to fulfil our mission statement, 'To educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ's Gospel'. Our school is a community founded on Christ and we therefore try to uphold the Gospel values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation. Therefore, if parents have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

Any complaint that is taken to a panel hearing is regarded as a formal complaint. Formal complaints will be reported annually to parents. Last year 2008/2009 there were no formal complaints.

A central record of informal complaints is kept.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's class teacher, form tutor or housemistress. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher, form tutor or housemistress cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for the member of staff to consult the Deputy Head or the Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant child's class teacher, form tutor or housemistress unless the Deputy Head or /the Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The child's class teacher, form tutor or housemistress will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within ten working days or in the event that the child's class teacher, form tutor or housemistress and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

Stage 2

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will speak to the parents concerned, normally within ten 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head 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. The Head will also give reasons for her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Formal resolution - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors, who has the authority to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of 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 Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within ten 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. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three working days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- 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 complete within five 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, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- 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 (in practice, DCSF) or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them. (Regulation 7. (K).

If parents do not feel their complaint has been considered fairly they may wish to complain to OFSTED if their child is a boarder or under the age of five. For day children over the age of five reference is made to ISI, the Independent Schools' Inspectorate.

Ofsted Address: Complaints 3 rd Floor Royal Exchange Buildings St Anne's Square Manchester M2 7LA	ISI Address: Complaints 1 st Floor Cap House 9-12 Long Lane London EC 1A 9HA
Ofsted Tel: 08456 404040	ISI Tel: 020 7600 0100
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk	Email: office@isi.net

Records of formal complaints will be kept on file for three years. The written record of complaints will be made available with the action taken.

A written record of complaints and the action taken will be made available on request to OFSTED and ISI.

FLOWCHART SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

