

Chiswick and Bedford Park Preparatory School

Complaints Procedure

Aims

Chiswick and Bedford Park Preparatory School ('the School') is committed to providing a high quality of education and care for our pupils and we want to listen and respond to the views of parents. We aim to ensure that any problems are easily resolved and that we respond promptly and appropriately to all complaints.

There are three stages to this procedure and we will take your complaint seriously at each stage. The procedure applies to parents of all pupils currently at the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS"), parents of prospective pupils and parents of pupils who have left the school, providing that the complaint was made prior to the pupil's departure.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them. In accordance with paragraph 32 (1)(b) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, the School will make available (via request to the Headmistress' PA) to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State, or the ISI, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific area of school life or about an individual member of staff. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The School is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, may raise in good faith.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days (i.e. Monday to Friday during term time). It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible; the School's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 20 working days. However, where a complaint relates to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, the school must investigate the complaint and notify complainants of the outcome within 20 working days of having received a written complaint. If a complaint proceeds to Stage 3, the Formal and Independent Review, the School will aim to complete this within a further 20 working days.

Recording Complaints

The School will keep a written record of all formal (Stage 2) complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing; and the action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). This should include the School's response.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

If you have a concern or complaint it is hoped that, in the first instance, you will contact your child's class teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway. Where the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary to consult a more senior member of staff. The Headmistress may be involved at the Informal stage, either at your request or by referral from a senior staff member. A written and dated record will be kept of all concerns and complaints. If the matter cannot be settled to your satisfaction within reason within 10 working days (to allow for holiday periods) you are advised to move to the procedure outlined in Stage 2 below. If the complaint is against the Headmistress, parents should make their complaint directly to the School Proprietors.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution by the Headmistress

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally you should write to the Headmistress to request that she formally investigate under Stage 2 of this procedure, and the Headmistress will acknowledge that she is dealing with it as such. You should provide her with information explaining the specific nature of your complaint. The Headmistress will consider the matter and decide the appropriate course of action to take. It may be necessary for her to carry out further investigations. She may speak to you (normally within 4 working days) to discuss the matter and if possible, reach a resolution. If it is not possible to give you a full reply within this time - for instance because a detailed investigation is required - you will be told what is being done to deal with your complaint. She will keep written records of all meetings and interviews in relation to the complaint. Once she is, as far as is practicable, satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be informed. She will give reasons for her decision.

If, following the Headmistress' response you are still not satisfied, you may wish to move to Stage 3 of this procedure. If the complaint is against the Headmistress, the Proprietors will call for a full report and for all the relevant documents. The Proprietor may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and may speak to or meet with parents to discuss the matter further. Once they are satisfied that, so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, the parent will be informed of the decision in writing. The Proprietor will provide reasons for the decision. If, following the response, you are still not satisfied, you may wish to move to Stage 3 or this procedure.

Stage 3 - Formal and Independent Review Request for Review

If you wish to invoke Stage 3 you should write to the Proprietors within 10 working days of receipt of the Headmistress' response (or longer by agreement) to request a Formal and Independent Review. In the application you must state the grounds on which you are asking for a review and the outcome which you seek. The independent reviewer is appointed by or on behalf of the Proprietors. This person must not, at any time, have been a proprietor of the school, or a member of staff or supply staff at the school, and must not have been the parent of a registered or former registered pupil at the school. They must also not have been directly involved in any matter detailed in the complaint.

The independent reviewer will convene a review meeting with the complainant and representatives from the School, as appropriate. Each will have an opportunity to set out written or oral submissions prior to the meeting.

At the meeting, each individual will have the opportunity to give statements and present their evidence, and witnesses will be called as appropriate to present their evidence.

The independent reviewer, the complainant and the school representative(s) will be given the chance to ask and reply to questions.

The complainant, Proprietor and Headmistress, and where relevant, the subject of the complaint, will be given a copy of the findings and recommendations made by the independent reviewer.

The School will inform those involved of the decision in writing within ten school days. A friend or relation may accompany the parents and legal representation will not normally be appropriate (the Proprietor must be given 7 working days' notice if the friend or relation is legally qualified). The school secretary will keep a hand-written minute of the main points which arise at the meeting. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners.

The letter will be retained in School for inspection by these parties. The decision of the independent reviewer will be final.

EYFS

The School will provide Ofsted and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate ("ISI"), on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years. Parents have the right to complain directly to Ofsted and ISI if they believe that the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements. Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 1231 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net. The School will notify parents and/or carers and supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and/or carers of children attending the School on a regular basis. All complaints about the delivery of EYFS must be completed within the 28 day timescale.

| Date reviewed | Date of next review | Date approved and agreed by Proprietors |
|---------------|---------------------|---|
| August 2020 | August 2021 | August 2020 |

