



Complaints Policy

Collingwood School

1. COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE INCLUDING EYFS

Policy

1.1 Whilst the School recognises the need for a formal complaints procedure to satisfy the demands of the Children's Act it is felt such a procedure should be seen as but one facet of a much wider procedure relating to communication and the resolution of the problems within the School context to which a common procedure is applicable.

1.2 Complaints, difficulties or problems will obviously range from the minor grumble to serious complaints involving standards of care, the behaviour of staff, infringements of the rights of the individual or even abuse.

1.3 The more day-to-day issues can and should be dealt with through conversation with relevant staff member, form teacher, or where necessary with the Assistant Head or Head teacher.

1.4 More serious complaints or problems, whether they originate from children, parents or staff should be made to a member of the senior management team (Assistant Head or the Head teacher). The person contacted will depend to some extent on the nature and severity of the complaint and also upon the complainant's choice determined by who they feel most at ease speaking to. The serious complaints should be set out in writing (either before or after the initial meeting) and signed by the complainant. The details will then be put on file in the personal file of the individual concerned.

1.5 Once a complaint or problem has been formally lodged it is the responsibility of the senior member of staff to whom the complaint has been made to:

- Inform the Head teacher at once.
- Investigate fully the factual basis of the complaint or problem.
- Interview other individuals involved to get an overall view of the variety perceptions, points of view and interpretations which may be influencing the matter.
- Organise a second meeting with the complainant to discuss the result and findings of the first and this second meeting should be as soon as reasonably possible after the first (only in exceptional circumstances should the delay be greater than a week) and the discussion should be logged and agreed by both parties.
- Children may bring a friend or other independent person with them to either or both meetings above.

1.6 Any complaints regarding the fulfillment of the EYFS requirements and/or regarding pupils in our EYFS setting will be dealt with within 28 days. By the end of 28 days the complainant will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.



1.7 If the complaint or problem is of a sufficiently serious nature it may be necessary to bring in an independent person to investigate it. This can be done at the request of the complainant or the senior staff member.

Procedure

1.8 Introduction

Collingwood School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents or pupils do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

1.9 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 Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult the Head teacher or the Deputy Head teacher.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head or to the Head teacher will usually be referred initially to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Deputy Head or the Head teacher deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher 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 7 days or in the event that the Form Teacher 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.
- At this stage the complainant will be given a copy of the Complaints Policy which is also available on the school website.

1.10 Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head teacher will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 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 teacher to carry out further investigations.
- The Head teacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head teacher 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 teacher will also give reasons for their decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.
- In normal circumstances there will be a resolution within 7 days and the complainant notified within this timeframe. The Head teacher will write to the complainant with the outcome whether that be resolution or moving to stage 3 of the Complaints procedure.

1.11 Stage 3 – Hearing by the Chairman of the Board of Governors



- Stage 3 will only apply after Stages 1 and 2 have been reached and the Head teacher has attempted a resolution of the complaint.
- The hearing will take place with the parents, the Chairman of Governors and the Head teacher, unless that is felt inappropriate by the Chairman. Should he or she or she feel it necessary, the Chairman may request secretarial services to keep minutes of the hearing.
- Parents requesting a Stage 3 hearing should do so in writing and the hearing should normally take place within 14 days of the letter being received.
- Once the Chairman 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 within 28 days. The Chairman will also give reasons for their decision.
- Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made provision will be made for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the Board of Governors and will consist of at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- The school will ensure that one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school for example serving or retired business person, civil servant, head or senior member of staff at another school, a person with a legal background and retired police officer.
- A parent will be allowed to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.
- The process will provide for the panel to make findings and recommendations and they shall be provided to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about and available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and Head teacher.
- The Stage 3 panel hearing will go ahead with or without the complainant unless he or she indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further.
- The school will provide a written record of all complaints whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.
- The correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except the secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

For EYFS a record of complaints is kept for 3 years. The school will provide OFSTED/ISI, upon request, details of complaints.

OFSTED contact details: OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

ISI contact details: Independent Schools Inspectorate, CAP House, 9-12
Long Lane, London
EC1A 9HA

Tel: 020 7710 9900

E: info@isi.net

1.12 Recording Complaints



Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all formal complaints, whether they are resolved at the the formal stage or proceed to a panel hearing and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld). At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

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.

1.13 For academic year 2017/19 there were no complaints that required Formal Resolution (Stage 2). There were 3 complaints recorded that were resolved at the initial informal stage

Reviewed: Leigh Hardie - September 2018

Next Review: September 2019