



Highfield Priory
Independent Day School
and Nursery

Complaints Procedure (Parents)

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The school has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to all its pupils including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (E.Y.F.S.). However, if parents do have a complaint either regarding their child or against a member of staff, including the Headteacher, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. In the case of a complaint against the Headteacher, parents should contact the Chair via the school and the same procedures will be followed.

Complaints Procedure

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 son/daughter'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/her to consult the Head or Deputy Head in the Head's absence.
- Complaints made directly to the Head/Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher unless the Head/Deputy Head 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 working 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.

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. 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 7 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 his/her decision.
- **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3** of this procedure.

Stage 3 – 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 been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- **The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.** 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 Board of Governors**, who will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 14 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 2 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 it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete **within 14 working days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it.** The decisions of the Panel will be final. **The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing, by email or post, to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about.**

E.Y.F.S.

As we have an Ofsted registered nursery, parents of children in the E.Y.F.S. also have the right to contact Ofsted and/or ISI e.g. they can investigate if you feel that:

- the school is not providing a good enough education
- the pupils are not achieving as much as they should, or their different needs are not being met
- the school is not well led and managed, or is wasting money
- the pupils' personal development and well-being are being neglected

Ofsted are not in a position to:

- investigate incidents that are alleged to have taken place
- judge how well a school investigated or responded to a complaint
- mediate between you and the school to resolve a dispute

Should you wish to contact Ofsted the helpdesk is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on 0300 123 1231 For concerns phone 0300123466.

The adviser on the helpdesk will discuss your concerns with you, advise you on whether to make a complaint to Ofsted in writing, or suggest other ways in which you can pursue your concerns.

To make a complaint to Ofsted or ISI you should write to:

Enquiries
The National Business Unit
Ofsted Piccadilly
Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

Or email at:
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

For concerns 0300113466

Or complete an online complaint form:
<http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints/>

OR

ISI
Cap House
9 – 12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

Telephone: 020 777109900

concerns@isi.net

To help them respond to your complaint please tell them:

- the full name of the school and the local authority in which it is situated
- as much as you can about the matters that concern you
- whether you have already raised your concerns with the school, the governing body and the local authority, how they responded, and why you are still dissatisfied
- if you do not wish your name to be disclosed to the school – remembering that the action we can then take is more limited.

Additional requirements apply for EYFS settings beyond those which apply to the main school. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Written Records

A written record of all complaints is undertaken by the school. The record states at which stage the complaint was resolved and what action was taken by the school (whether the complaint was upheld or not). All records of complaints are kept for at least three years.

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 or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school under section 162A of the 2002 Act as amended; where disclosure is required during the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year:

There was 1 complaint in the Academic year 2023-2024

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for this policy.

Date last reviewed: September 2024

Authority

The Full Board of Governors, by delegation to sub-committees, is responsible for formulating the policies and procedures that will ensure the school continue to achieve the aims of the overall school strategy. Hence, each sub-committee has Terms of Reference and assigned responsibility for policies within that scope. The sub-committees are: Finance and General Purposes Committee, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee, Safeguarding Committee, Education Committee and Marketing Committee.