



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

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

"The complaints policy is posted on the School's web site and is available to all parents and prospective parents. A printed version of the policy can be supplied on request."

This policy applies to the whole school so includes the EYFS setting.

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's Class Teacher or the Phase Leader for the particular section of the school. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher or Phase Leader cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head or the Head Master will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher or Phase Leader unless the Deputy Head or the Head Master deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Class Teacher/Phase Leader 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 a reasonable time period or in the event that the Class Teacher/Phase Leader 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 Master. The Head Master will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head Master will invite the parents concerned to meet with him as soon as possible, hopefully **within the school week at least** 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 Master to carry out further investigations.
- The Head Master will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head Master 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 Master 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 Professor Boardman, who has been appointed by the Governors as an independent, impartial advisor to chair and 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 – the Chairman of the Complaints Panel, Professor Boardman.** Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of Governors in consultation with the Chair of the Complaints Panel. The Chair of the Complaints Panel, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 14 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 3 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 14 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 make a complaint to Ofsted should they so wish. The school will provide necessary details to assist Parents if they wish to take this action.

A written record will be kept of all complaints which will include how and when the matter was resolved, i.e. whether the complaint has been resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003, by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, or where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection or under other legal authority. Such documentation to be retained for a least three years following the initial complaint.

The Complaints Procedure has not been invoked by any Parent since the last Inspection.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

(Chairman of Governors)