

Complaints Policy



Little Lambs

NURSERY



SUTTON VALENCE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

This Policy applies to Sutton Valence School (including, as the context requires, the Little Lambs Nursery, the Pre-Preparatory School and the Preparatory School).

Complaints Procedure Policy Part Seven of ISI Integrated Handbook, Regulatory Requirements – Complaints

The School has, and follows, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory standards.

This procedure addresses ISI Regulatory Requirement (effective February 2016, updated February 2020), Part 6 Provision of Information Para 32 sub para 3 (f) and Part 7 Manner in which complaints are to be held is Para 33.

Introduction

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. If, however, pupils or parents do have a complaint, the procedure is as follows.

Pupil

If pupils have a complaint, they are encouraged to contact a member of staff they trust, in many cases their Form Teacher. They can, if they need support, take a friend with them. If the issue is not resolved to their satisfaction then they can approach the Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery, the Academic Deputy Head or the Deputy Head as appropriate who will investigate the matter promptly and thoroughly.

It is an obligation to follow up pupil complaints and to investigate specific allegations where they have been made. It is a necessity to keep a written record of questions asked and procedures followed when looking into a complaint. Any formal complaint relating to the running of the School should be addressed to the Head of the Prep School, either in writing or personally. Pupils will not be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

It should be remembered that all complaints should be recorded on the pupil's file.

Parental Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. With this in mind all complaints and concerns will normally be acknowledged within 48 hours;
- Parents with a complaint should normally contact the teacher in question, their Form Teacher or their Key Worker. In many cases the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the teacher and/or Form Teacher / Key

Worker cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for a parent to consult a Head of Department, the Academic Deputy Head, the Deputy Head or the Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery;

- Complaints made directly to the Academic Deputy Head, Deputy Head, Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery, or the Head of the Prep School (the Senior Management Team [SMT]) will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff unless the SMT member deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally;
- A written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received will be kept by the School. Should the matter not be resolved immediately, receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 5 days and a response provided within 10 working school days. In the event that the School and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint, within the next 10 working school days, in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- Any parent who is not satisfied and wishes to make a formal complaint should make it known to the Head of the Prep School by telephone, email, letter or personal visit by appointment. The Head of the Prep School will acknowledge the complaint within 48 hours, consider the complaint and investigate it as appropriate. The Head of the Prep School will normally respond to the parent within 21 working days;
- If the parent is not satisfied with this response, they should notify the School within 10 working school days. At this point the School will make provision for a hearing before a panel of three persons who have not been involved in the matter detailed in the complaint, and in compliance with the Education (Independent School Standard) Regulations 2003. One person on the panel will be independent of the management and running of the School.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

The Clerk to the Governing Body will be responsible for the appointment of the panel and the time scales for the management of the complaint will be as follows:

- The Headmaster of the School will reply to the parent within five working days;
- The parents will be given seven working days' notice of the date of the hearing;
- The process should be complete within 28 working days from acknowledging the complaint.

Parents, and the person being complained about, may attend the hearing and may be accompanied. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the panel will resolve the parent's 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 ten days of the hearing.

The panel will write to the parent informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the panel will be final. The panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parent, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about.

Confidentiality and Complaints Record

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. A written record is kept of all formal complaints, their outcomes, and whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. Notes are also kept of any action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). This record is regularly reviewed by the Head of the Prep School, the Headmaster or a senior member of staff. The complaints record is also a standing item at the first senior management team meeting at the start of each term. Records of complaints are maintained for three years after the pupil has left the School and are kept confidential. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Records of informal complaints are recorded on iSams or in the pupil files in the Head's PA's office, as appropriate.

EYFS

Parents of pupils in the EYFS can also contact OfSTED on 03001231231 or the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) on 020 7600 0100 to make a complaint should they so wish. The school will notify complainants of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint and will provide OfSTED and ISI, on request, a written record of all complaints made during a specified period and the action which was taken as a result of the complaint. Following an inspection a copy of the report will be supplied to parents and/or carers.

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