

Complaints Procedure Policy

THE AIM OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The School aims, wherever possible, to resolve complaints fairly to the satisfaction of the complainant, the person about whom the complaint is made and the School. The complainant may be a parent, member of staff, volunteer, visitor to the School, neighbour or a person acting on behalf of our children who are unable to communicate with the degree of sophistication required for a complaint.

THE NATURE OF COMPLAINTS

A complaint can be a verbal or written expression of concern or dissatisfaction in relation to an individual child.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

A complaint should be delivered (verbally or in writing) to the Head of School, or person acting in his place, who is responsible for the operation and monitoring of the complaints procedure. A complaint can also be made direct to OFSTED.

Parents and children also have the right to access the complaints procedure of their Placing Authority.

THE PROCESS OF DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

Once a complaint is received the following procedure will be followed:

Stage 1

The Head of School, or person acting in his place, will discuss the issue with the complainant and the member(s) of staff involved. At this stage a meeting between all the parties may be called if the Head of School feels this is necessary.

The School's response and intended action will be communicated to the complainant. If he or she is satisfied with this outcome a short report will be filed in the child's records but only with the agreement of the child's parents. It will also be held in the School complaints file. On no account should there be any reprisals against those making the complaint.

If the issue cannot be satisfactorily concluded by this process, Stage 2 of the procedure will be invoked:

Stage 2

The complainant will be informed of the School's designated independent person. At present this is **Dr Winchester**. The complaint should be communicated to this designated person either verbally or in writing. If the complaint is made verbally this must be followed up by a written report by the complainant. The complaint will be fully considered by the independent person who will respond within 14 days to both the complainant and the Head of School. A copy of the proposed resolution will be filed in the child's School records and a separate complaints file. If the complainant is not satisfied by the response of the independent person then Stage 3 of the process will be invoked which can involve consideration by a panel. The complainant will be informed of this option by the independent person.

Stage 3

Within 28 days of receiving the independent person's response at Stage 2, the complainant can ask for the matter to be considered by the meeting of a special complaints panel. This is made up of three people, including one independent of the Royal School for the Blind, Liverpool. The complainant and Stage 2 independent person will be sent notification of the panel's meeting and both will be invited to attend. If the complainant so wishes, he or she may choose another person to accompany him/her.

The meeting will be as informal as possible and both complainant and independent person will be invited to stage their case.

The panel will be drawn up by the School Governors and will be impartial, balanced and will operate in confidence.

The panel will decide whether or not the complaint is upheld and will make its decision and report its recommendation within 24 hours of the end of the meeting. These will be made available to the complainant, Head of School, independent person and any other relevant people – including the child's parent(s) if he and/or she is/are not the complainants.

A copy of this will be held in the School's complaints record book.

In the event that a complaint is made against the Head of School, Stage 2 is immediately put into action.

Any serious complaints against the School OFSTED are to be notified.

Records of complaints will be reviewed regularly by the Head of School to ensure satisfactory operation of the complaints procedure.

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