

STROUD SCHOOL: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS

Introduction

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils and aims to provide the best service that it reasonably can for its pupils and parents. However, inevitably, there will be occasions when issues of concern may arise. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is dealt with as a complaint and in within the scope of these procedures. The School will usually try to resolve these informally but understands that this may not always be possible. It is the intention of the School to provide a response to any concern or complaint within one week of the initial contact with the parent or other complainant (afterwards referred to as 'the parent') however this may be impacted by school holidays and other periods of school closure. Any information provided as a result of a complaint being raised is subject to the School's Confidentiality Policy. The School's Complaints Policy is on the School's website and is also available to parents on request.

Parent's Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 - Informal resolution

If a parent has a concern or complaint about the School he or she should, in the first instance, contact their child's tutor. He or she will conduct an initial investigation and respond accordingly. Where necessary the tutor may involve more senior staff.

If the initial response is unsatisfactory, the parent should write to the relevant Head of Department (Head of Early Years, Key Stage 1, Middle School, or Senior School Teaching and Learning – email details are available on the school website). He or she will undertake a further investigation and will contact the parent within one working week. A parent may request that the issue be re-examined by another senior member of staff if he or she feels that a second opinion is required.

In all cases above, the information regarding the concern or complaint, the investigation and the response will be recorded and a copy passed to the Head of Department. This will be reviewed termly by the Head who will monitor patterns of concern and report these to the Governors.

Stage 2 - Formal resolution

If this does not prove to be satisfactory to the parent concerned, the complaint should be put in writing to the Head. Any complaint about the Head should normally be referred to the Head of King Edward VI. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head will meet 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. This would normally be within 7 working days of the meeting with the Head.

In the event that an investigation by the Head does not result in a satisfactory outcome the complaint should be referred on to the Head of King Edward VI, who will usually respond within 7 working days,

and will usually carry out an investigation within 14 working days.

Stage 3 - Complaints Panel

If there is no satisfactory outcome after the Head of King Edward VI has made a full investigation, the parent should write directly to the Chair of Governors of the Stroud Committee and he/she will convene the Governing Body's Complaints Review Panel as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within twenty working days of receipt. However, the Head will normally have discussed complaints with the Chair of Governors before making a decision. The Governing Body will nominate a number of members with delegated powers to hear complaints at this stage. The panel will consist of at least three people, two governors who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, together with a representative from Global Mediation or similar body, acting as an assessor and facilitator independent of the management and running of the school. The Panel will aim to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the parent and the School. However, it has to be recognised that the parent may not be satisfied with the outcome of the Review panel and it may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations that will satisfy the parent that his or her complaint has been given a fair hearing.

The Clerk to the Governors will set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that these are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible. Relevant information will be sent to all parties at least five working days before the hearing.

The hearing will be held in private and it is recognised that many may feel nervous about the procedure. Every effort will be made to put individuals at their ease and to ensure that the proceedings are as welcoming as possible. Particular care will be taken if any of the pupils in the School are involved at this stage. The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The Head may question both the parent and other witnesses after each has spoken. The Head will then state the School's case and the parent may question the Head and any other witnesses. The panel may ask questions at any point. The parent and the Head will be invited to sum up the nature of the complaint at the end of the proceedings and then both parties will leave the panel to confer and to take its decision. The Clerk to the Governors will take minutes of the hearing and notify all parties of the panel's decision and any recommendations in writing, within a given period of time. A copy will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and the Head.

On receipt of the panel's decision, the Head will, if appropriate, notify all parties of his response to these in writing, within 5 working days. In the absence of procedural irregularity, the Head's decision will then be final.

Record Keeping

A written record is kept of all concerns or complaints, detailing whether they have been resolved at the preliminary stage, first formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. A written record of the actions taken by the school as a result of complaints, whether or not they were upheld, is also maintained. 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.

Formal Complaints Progressing to Panel Hearing: In the academic year of 17-18 there were 5 complaints, all of which were resolved; 1 at Level 1 and 4 at Level 2.

Early Years Addendum

In addition to the points above, complaint investigations in the Early Years shall take no more than 28 days from the time of a written complaint being received by the school and the completion of the investigation. The contact details below can be used if parents wish to register a complaint that the School is not meeting the requirements of the EYFS. Records of EYFS complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Ofsted

Picadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
General Helpline – 0300 123 1231
Textphone - 01616188524

ISI

Ground Floor
Cap House
9 – 12 Long Lane,
London
EC1A 9HA
Tel: 020 76000100