

Complaints Policy

Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is now a complaint.

Complaints should be handled in the following way:

STAGE 1 – Informal complaints. The school will take informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage to reduce the number that develop into formal complaints.

Most concerns are dealt with informally and most are resolved with the involvement of parents and teachers and occasionally with more senior staff.

Class teachers will usually receive the first approach and it is usual in such cases that they are resolved on the spot.

If such concerns still persist then parents are encouraged to speak to more senior staff and ultimately the Headteacher in an attempt to resolve the concern informally.

Complaints at this stage are normally dealt with within 3 working days but may be longer during holiday periods or if those involved in the complaint cannot be contacted immediately. In such cases parents would be contacted with a revised time scale.

Beyond this, if any parents wish to make a formal complaint to the school it should be handled in the following way:

STAGE 2

Parents should make a formal complaint in writing and forward it to the Headteacher at the school.

The school will notify parents within 24 hours that their complaint has been received. A response to the complaint will be made within five working days

The response will indicate whether the complaint is valid in whole, in part or not at all.

The response may also include:

- an apology
- an explanation

- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- an undertaking to review school policies in the light of the complaint

The response may also identify any areas of agreement and also clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred.

STAGE 3

If parents are unhappy about the outcome of stage 2 then they should:

1. Write to the 'Complaints Co-ordinator' at the school. This person is independent of the management and running of the school.
2. A panel hearing will take place which includes the Independent Complaints Co-ordinator together with two other people who were not involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. This meeting will take place within 10 working days of the complaint being received by the Complaints Co-ordinator depending upon their availability.
3. Parents will be invited to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish.
4. Should a parent subsequently decide not to proceed with a panel hearing for whatever reason, the panel will still meet, in the parents absence, to bring the matter to a conclusion.
5. The panel may:
 - (i) dismiss the complaint in whole or part;
 - (ii) uphold the complaint in whole or part;
 - (iii) decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
 - (iv) recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.
6. The panel will make available their findings and recommendations, in writing, to the complainants, proprietors, head teacher and, if relevant, the person complained about within 3 working days of the panel hearing.

7. The panel will make available a copy of these findings for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher.

RECORDS OF COMPLAINTS

1. The school will keep a written record of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at any of the three stages. They will also record action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
2. All 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 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The school keeps a record of formal complaints for at least three years. The school received one formal complaints during the last year.

This policy is made available to parents on the school website or hard copies are available from the school office.

Parents are also free to make a complaint to ISI including complaints about EYFS.

Relevant contact details are set out below.

ISI: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA
Phone: 020 7600 0100 or e-mail concerns@isi.net

Complaints may also be made to the local authorities below:

Carlisle Area

Children's Services
3 Alfred Street North
Carlisle
Cumbria
Phone: 01228 607002

Cumbria LSCB
Cumbria House
117 Botchergate
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA1 1 RD

Phone 01228 226898
Email LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk

This policy is applicable to all pupils in our school including our boarders and those in our EYFS setting. It is available to staff, pupils, parents and the parents of prospective pupils on the school's website and paper copies are available on request from the school office.

This policy was revised in August 2018 and will be reviewed in August 2019.

N A Rice MA
School Proprietor