



LEWES OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Complaints Policy

POLICY ON COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Lewes Old Grammar 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 with care and in accordance with this procedure. Lewes Old Grammar School makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the school's website and in the school office during the school day, and Lewes Old Grammar School will ensure that **parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.**

In accordance with paragraph 24(3)(g) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations January 2017, Lewes Old Grammar School will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the ISI for the purposes of section 162A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (as subsequently amended), details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

This policy also includes any complaints relating to EYFS. Our EYFS setting believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting.

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done or acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you [or your child] raises in good faith.

All formal complaints should be directed to the schools Complaints Officer, Georgina Seligmann: seligmann@logs.uk.com

Concerns regarding the EYFS can also be referred to Carrie Whyte, Assistant Head of Morley House whytec1@logs.uk.com however any formal complaints must also be sent to Georgina Seligmann.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 28 working days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. **Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant will be notified within 28 days.**

Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 28 days, if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure working days refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time excluding bank holidays.

Recording Complaints

All complaints are recorded regardless of the outcome. Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph (k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2017, by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

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/daughter's Form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher cannot resolve the

matter alone it may be necessary for [him/her] to consult a head of department, the Assistant Head or the Headmaster.

- Complaints made directly to a head of department, the Assistant Head or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher unless the head of department, the Assistant Head or the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- Any parent who has a concern about an aspect of the EYFS provision talks over, first of all, his/her worries and anxieties with the Assistant Head of Morley House, Carrie Whyte.
- The Form teacher 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 7 days or in the event that the Form teacher 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.
- If, however, the complaint is against the Headmaster, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chairman of Trustees.

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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will speak to and/or meet the parents concerned, normally within 7 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster 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 Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If the complaint is against the Headmaster, the Chairman of Trustees will call for a full report from the Headmaster and for all the relevant documents. The Chairman may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chairman is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chairman will give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure. This must be done within 7 days of receiving the response from the Headteacher.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to the Secretary of the Trustees who has been appointed by the Trustees to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Convenor 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 normally not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.
- 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.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint 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 make findings and may make recommendations.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, normally within 7 days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about as well as the Chairman of Trustees and the Headmaster. A written copy will also be kept by the school.
- The school reserves the right not to reinvestigate the same complaint once all stages have been exhausted and a solution provided. The same applies to complaints which the school believes to be of a malicious nature.

The role of the Office for Standards in Education, Early Years Directorate (Ofsted) and the Area Safeguarding Children Committee.

- Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. In addition, where there seems to be a possible breach of the setting's registration requirements, it is essential to involve Ofsted as the registering and inspection body with a duty to ensure the National Standards for Day Care are adhered to.
- The address and telephone number of our Ofsted regional centre is:

OFSTED, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

- The address and telephone number for Independent Schools Inspectorate is:

ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

Telephone: 0207 600 0100

- These details are displayed on our setting's notice board.
- If a child appears to be at risk, our setting follows the procedures of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee in our local authority.
- In these cases, both the parent and setting are informed and the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator works with Ofsted or the Area Safeguarding Children Committee to ensure a proper investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.

Records

- A record of complaints against our setting and/or the children and/or the adults working in our setting is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.
- The outcome of all complaints is recorded in the Complaints Summary Record which is available for parents and Ofsted inspectors on request.
- Parents will be notified of an inspection once the school has been notified. The final report will be provided to parents of children who attend the school.
- All complaints are kept on record for 5 years.

Appendix

In order to secure an appropriate and independent panel member the school will work with Clerks Associates UK, The Business Centre, 758-760 Great Cambridge Rd, Enfield, EN1 3GN.

Recommended review period: annual
Review by: HR and Compliance Manager
Date reviewed: September 2017
Date to be reviewed: September 2018

Number of complaints registered under this formal procedure in the previous academic year (Sept 2017 - Sept 2018) – Three.