

COMPLAINTS POLICY INCLUDING EYFS AND U2S

Introduction

Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care it provides for its pupils. However, if parents / carers/ staff / pupils / social workers / or other* (*hereafter known as the complainant) do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. This Policy refers to parents of pupils throughout the School, including the Early Years' Foundation Stage.

All EYFS and U2 complaints will be resolved within 28 days of the initial complaint.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If the complainant has a complaint, they should normally contact the relevant staff (e.g. the pupil's teacher) in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the satisfaction of those concerned. If the person contacted cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult the Headmaster, Colonel Keith Boulter, who will be informed of any complaints as a matter of course.

Complaints made directly to the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant staff member unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.

Written records will be kept of all complaints indicating at which stage they were resolved. Should the matter not be resolved within one week or, in the event that the relevant staff member and the complainant fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the complainant will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the complainant should put his / her 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 meet or speak to the complainant and this will normally be within 3 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 the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the complainant will be informed of this decision in writing within 28 days. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If the complainant is still not satisfied with the decision, he/she should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If the complainant seeks to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), he/she will be referred to Mrs Verity White, who has been appointed by the Headmaster to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Headmaster. The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 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 not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.

The complainant may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the 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 it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 28 days of the Hearing. The Panel will inform the complainant of its decision by a pre-agreed method of communication (including letter, email, and fax) and the reasons for it.

The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Headmaster and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy will also be held on file in the School Office.

The School will always endeavour to resolve a complaint to the complainant's satisfaction or with another appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay.

Pupils will never be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

The complainant can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will 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 or where any other legal obligation prevails.

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It is the policy of the School to keep a record of all complaints made for at least three years. These will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request, together with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and a note of the action that was taken as a result of each complaint.

It should be noted that, if still dissatisfied, the complainant may wish to speak directly to OFSTED who can be contacted at:

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

Tel: 0300 123 1231,

OR

ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) at:

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

Tel: 020 7600 0100

After every completed stage of the complaints procedure, confirmation of satisfaction with the outcome is sought from the complainant by telephone or in writing from the Headmaster. Outcomes are recorded and placed on file.

The School recorded no formal complaints in the Academic Year 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 (to date).

Barnardiston Hall considers formal complaints to be those which have reached Stage 2 (Formal Resolution) of the Complaints Procedure.

Updated ~~1 November 2019~~ April 2019