



ASHTON HOUSE SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

- We believe that our school provides a good education for all our pupils and that the Head Teacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with pupils and their families. However, the school has procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians, pupils, or by members of the public. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases. **This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.**
- If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk immediately to the child's class teacher, subject teacher, teacher in charge of the Pre Prep department, or another member of staff with whom they feel comfortable, or the Head Teacher.
- If a pupil has any concerns or complaints, we encourage them to talk to a member of staff directly, or through their parents, to either the member of staff or the Head Teacher.
- If the school and the Head Teacher cannot resolve any complaint, those concerned may ask for the Principal to become involved and a meeting will be convened.
- If all avenues have been explored and the problem is still unresolved then the parents may ask their lawyer or MP to intervene.
- All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

Aims and Objectives

- Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaints.
- We give consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible.
- We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and in all cases we put the interests of the pupil above all other issues.
- We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

Monitoring and review

- This policy is made available to all parents so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.
- The Head Teacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved.
- The Senior Management Team examines this log and reviews the policy annually.
- **The record of complaints regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage is kept for three years**

Complaints Information For Parents

Ashton House School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. This leaflet will show you how to use our complaints system.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, which needs a response. We wish to ensure that:

- Parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so.
- We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way, either by dialogue or letter.
- Parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously.
- We take action.

“How should I complain?”

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

Any member of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, to raise class matters with the class teacher, sports concerns with the Head of Sport. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff or directly to the Head Teacher.

“I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me.”

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas.

“I am not sure whether to complain or not.”

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to voice them. If in doubt, you should contact the school, as we are here to help.

“What will happen next?”

If you raise something face to face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction. If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days, either personally or in writing, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it and any action taken or proposed.

“What about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Head Teacher and those directly involved.

It is school’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety is at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police or the Area Child Protection Unit if the issue raised fell within the school’s Child Protection Policy. You would be fully informed.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints will not be pursued.

Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Head Teacher will offer to refer the matter to the Principal. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Principal. The Principal will call for a full report from the Head Teacher, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. This may result in a positive solution, but if it does not, the Principal will invite you to a meeting. At his meeting your complaint will be heard by a panel, consisting of two partners of the school and one person independent of the management and running of the School. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage. The panel will make its findings and recommendations known to all parties, in writing, within 5 working days.

We hope that we will be able to satisfy your concerns. If we do not, you may wish to seek independent legal advice and your advisor should contact the school’s solicitor. There are certain circumstances in which the Secretary of State has an interest and you could contact him directly through your lawyer or M.P. He should then ask the Registrar of Independent Schools to investigate, usually through H.M. Inspectors of Schools.

Parents with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have the right to complain to Ofsted or the Independent schools Inspectorate.

We hope this recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.

COMPLAINT REPORT FORM

To be completed by the member of staff first approached and given to the Head Teacher without delay

Date:

Complaint brought by:

Complaint brought to:

Summary of details: (Attach letter if complaint was written)

Action taken:

Has the problem been resolved to the satisfaction of all involved:

Yes/No

If not, what arrangements have been made to work towards a speedy solution?

Date of resolution of problem:

Staff Member:

Head Teacher: