



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

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It is our belief that pupils in a school co-operate more willingly, enjoy their school life more and feel more comfortable if they have the perception that their parents support the School and have confidence in the staff. It is therefore very important to us that the parents actively convey such confidence and support to their children (under 18 - that is, being the minimum age at which a person can leave education or training is eighteen, those born after 1 September 1997). It is reasonable to assume that even parents who are generally happy and content with the way their children are treated at school, will sometimes disagree with decisions, arrangements, or opinions of teachers and feel the need to communicate their views or complain. The way in which such complaints are conveyed and dealt with has the potential to strongly influence children's perception of the school and the staff and should therefore be carefully thought through.

It is fair to say that children are by nature inclined to be subjective in the way in which they report incidents and we would therefore ask that parents take steps to ensure that facts are correct before lodging a complaint. Should your child speak to you about something that causes you concern please follow these guidelines:

- Contact the relevant staff member to find out what they see as the facts of the matter.
- If you believe that your child or you have been compromised by the actions or comments of the teacher, please convey your concerns to the teacher to initiate discussions as to how to resolve the problem. Please do this in a calm and civil way and with the intention of reaching a solution. If you are satisfied at the conclusion of this discussion, the matter need go no further.
- If, however, you are not satisfied at this time, please contact the Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal with your concerns.
- The Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal may need some time to research the incident before coming back to you with comments and suggestions as to how to resolve the issue. This should occur within a period of two weeks.

### **SCHOOL POLICY WITH REGARD TO COMPLAINTS**

**These procedures should take place between the adults involved and parents are urged not to argue with or speak in an angry way to (or of) teachers in front of their children. This undermines the child's confidence in the teacher and it is very difficult to repair this breach of confidence even after the original issue is resolved.**

Should parents be dissatisfied with the conclusion of their discussions with members of staff or the Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal they are free to contact the Chair of Trustees of Kingdom Education Limited through the school in writing to further their complaint, in accordance with Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure outlined below. The decision of this panel will be final according to The Education (Independent Schools Standard) (England) Regulations 2010 (as subsequently amended).

**Please see below our Complaints Procedure for your perusal.**

Although The King's School is committed to excellence of service, staff are not perfect and may sometimes make mistakes. It should be the intent of all involved in the school community to deal with such mistakes in a way that brings reconciliation and restitution and is committed to a solution rather than just the allocation of blame. It may also occur that after investigation of an incident, the Manager and the management of The King's School decide to stand by the teacher's decision or action and disagree with the parent's point of view. Careful discussion would then need to take place as to how to continue in good relationship with the parents under these circumstances. Notwithstanding, please see below the School Complaint Procedure.



# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR THE KING'S SCHOOL/HIGHFIELD PRESCHOOL

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## Introduction

The King's School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided for its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated seriously by the School in accordance with this procedure.

The King's School makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils in the school office during the school day and The King's 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 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, The King's 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 an independent inspectorate, details of the School's Complaints Procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

"Parent(s)" means the holder(s) of parental responsibility for a current pupil about whom the complaint relates.

## 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, acted unfairly or failed to do something that it should have done.

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 penalized for a complaint that you or your child raises in good faith.

## Time frame 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 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

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.

## Recording Complaints

The Parent Complaint Memorandum, available from the Bursar's or Secretary's Office, should be completed for all complaints.

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 2010, by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required 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 Class Teacher/Tutor. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher cannot resolve the matter, it may be necessary for parents to consult the Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal.

Complaints made directly to the Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher unless the Head of Primary or of Secondary or the Principal deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Head of Primary or Secondary or Principal 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 seven working days or in the event that the Class Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint to the next stage of this procedure.

If, however, the complaint is against the Principal, 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 Principal, who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Principal will meet with or speak to the parents concerned, normally within seven working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, an agreement will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations.



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The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Principal 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 Principal will also give reasons for his decision.

If the complaint is against the Principal, the Chair of Trustees will call for a full report from the Principal and for all the relevant documents. The Chair 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 Chair 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 Chair of Trustees will give reasons for his/her decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to the final stage of this Procedure.

### **Stage 3 - Panel Hearing**

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), the matter will be referred to David Crook, the Chair of Trustees, who has been appointed 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, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Panel members will be appointed by Trustees and the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen working days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matters be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than seven working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may attend the meeting and may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' 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 the 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 seven days of the hearing, although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following 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 Chair of Trustees and the Principal.

A written record will be kept of all complaints and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a Panel hearing.



Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph 6(3)(f) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as subsequently amended), by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the school's inspectors under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

### **WRITTEN COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EYFS:**

The King's School will, in relation to written complaints relating to the statutory framework for the EYFS Foundation Class and Highfield Preschool, provide Ofsted/ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

The King's School/Highfield Preschool will investigate all written complaints relating to the requirements under the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Please note that for the purposes of this document, a 'working day' falls between Monday and Friday; school holiday closures may delay the process as they are not 'work' days.

Parents may also complain directly to Ofsted or to ISI if they wish.

Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 1234 234 or by email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

#### **By post**

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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

Renewed: September 2019  
Next Review: September 2020

Legislation: **[Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2010](#); [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#); [Children's Act 1989](#); [Section 39\(1\)\(a\) of the Childcare Act 2006](#); [Education and Skills Act, 2008](#).**



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**THE KINGS SCHOOL**  
**PARENT COMPLAINT MEMORANDUM**

Please complete and return this memorandum to The School Office

Date: _____	Ref.# _____ :	Compaunt taken _____ by:
Parent: _____ _____ _____ _____		Telephone/Letter/ _____ Fax : _____ Contact: _____ Tel: _____ Fax: _____
Nature of Complaint: _____ _____ _____ _____		Child(ren): _____ Teacher: _____ Class: _____
Action required: _____ _____		
Reported to Ofsted/ISI: Yes/No: _____ Date: _____		
By whom _____		
Date: _____		
Actions taken: _____ Action Completed: YES/NO Resolution Stage _____		Signed off: _____  Date: _____

cc Mr Clive Case, Principal

With effect from 1 October 2015, schools are required by The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 ('the ADR Regulations') to provide parents at conclusion of the final stage of the complaints procedure with the name and address of a certified alternative dispute resolution ('ADR') entity should both parties wish to engage in ADR. Schools are not required to include information about ADR in the complaints procedure itself and while we are prepared to cooperate with the ADR, there are however no named school specific ADR entities.

Produced by E M Taylor, Bursar