



PRINCE'S MEAD

Parents' Complaints Procedure

February 2020



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Introduction

Prince's Mead 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 in accordance with this Procedure.

This policy applies to all families in the school, including those who have children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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 the Headmaster or a Member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Complaints made directly to the Headmaster or a Member of the Senior Leadership Team will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless one of the afore mentioned deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

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 of actual receipt by the Form Teacher of the complaint 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.

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 meet with 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 her decision.

- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure
- Should the complaint be against the Headmaster the complainant should put their complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors. If the parents are not satisfied with the response they may invoke a panel hearing.



Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a nominated Governor, who has been appointed by the Governors 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 Chairman of Governors, who will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working 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 or be available for inspection at the School.
- The parents 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 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 14 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision 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 parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Record Keeping

A written record of all complaints is kept and an account of whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or went to a panel hearing is recorded. Whilst the regulations require that a record of complaints is limited to all those made in writing under a formal part of the procedure, as a school we keep a record of informal complaints. These are kept for management purposes by the Headmaster to enable patterns of concern to be monitored.



Early Years Foundation Stage

Any written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements would be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. If the parents are not happy with the resolution regarding the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, they may complain to Ofsted and/or ISI.

Ofsted can be contacted at Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD – enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

ISI can be contacted at Cap House, 9 – 12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA – info@isi.net

Summary

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required under section 109 of the 2008 Act and/ or paragraph 33 (K) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations as amended from 2014, by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, or where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection or under other legal authority.

In the previous twelve months one formal complaint has been received by the school.