



HILL HOUSE SCHOOL

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Introduction**

It is the School's policy to ensure that parents with a grievance relating to their child's education can use a procedure that can help to resolve problems as quickly and fairly as possible. This procedure applies to all areas of the school, including Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy is available to parents (via the Parent Handbook) and prospective parents (via the Prospectus)

### **Stage 1 (Informal)**

If a parent has a grievance they should discuss it initially with the relevant Teacher, Tutor, Head of Department, Housemaster/Mistress or Senior Manager. We hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved in this way. Such concerns will normally be dealt with within one week.

### **Stage 2 (Formal)**

If the problem remains unresolved, parents will be invited to write to the Headmaster about the complaint. He will then arrange a formal meeting normally within 10 days to discuss the complaint and parents may be accompanied by a person of their choice, if they so wish; this does not include legal representation.

Following this meeting, the Headmaster will give a written response normally within 10 working days. Complaints concerning EYFS will be dealt with within 28 days. If parents are not satisfied with the Headmaster's response, they should inform the school of this within 28 days of receiving the written response outlined above, explaining which of their concerns remain. Otherwise, the complaint will be considered to have been closed.

### **Stage 3 (Panel)**

If, having completed the above stages, the problem remains unresolved, parents may approach the Governors in writing via the School Office.

If the complaint is against the Headmaster, parents should make their complaint directly to the Governors in writing via the School Office.

The Chairman (or Deputy) will then convene a Complaints' Hearing. This will take place normally within the next 14 days, and constitute a panel of 3 persons, at least one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. None of the panel will be involved in the issues specific to the complaint. Parents may attend the hearing, and be accompanied if they so wish; this does not include legal representation.

The Complaints' Panel will make findings and recommendations, which will be given in writing to the parents, Headmaster, and, if applicable, the member of staff about whom the complaint has been made. This will normally be done within 10 days of the Hearing. The Governors' decision is final.

### **Persistent Correspondence**

Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this can be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of the policy.

### **Record Keeping**

A record of complaints is kept for at least 7 years, including details of at which stage a complaint was resolved. Records concerning allegations of abuse must be preserved for the term of the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.

All meetings will be documented. A written record of all Complaints' Panel Hearings and Recommendations will be kept by the Headmaster and be available at school to the complainant.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them. The record of complaints in EYFS will be made available to OFSTED and ISI on request.

### **Other Bodies**

Parent can also contact OFSTED (Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester M2 7LA) or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, Telephone 020 7600 0100) to make a complaint.

## **School Fee Plan**

If a parent wishes to make a complaint relating to the School's credit broking activities or the sale of School Fee Plan, they should send details to the School Bursar. The School will then notify the Premium Credit Limited (PCL) Compliance Team. All investigations, enquiries and communications with the complainant will be conducted by PCL, therefore the School will not attempt to discuss or resolve complaints directly with the complainant. PCL will send a Summary Resolution letter for complaints resolved by the close of three business days. If a complaint cannot be resolved in three business days PCL have eight weeks to investigate and resolve a complaint to be in line with Dispute Resolution rules (found in the Financial Conduct Authority handbook).

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