



HOE BRIDGE SCHOOL

Complaints Policy

Statement

Hoe Bridge School 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.

Complaints are expressions of parental or pupil dissatisfaction or concern, written or verbal, regarding any aspect of the way in which a child is being taught or dealt with by staff. Complaints may be in connection with rules and procedures, the conduct of staff or any aspect of school life which impacts upon parents or their child. If this is a Safeguarding issue the matter should be instantly referred to the respective DSL Designated Safeguarding Lead. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of such complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Hoe Bridge School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in this document and it is posted on the website under School Policies and is available on request from the school. This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those within the EYFS setting.

Hoe Bridge School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

This document is reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team or as events or legislation change requires. The next scheduled change is April 2018.

Procedures

There are three stages to the complaints procedure:

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 contact their child's class/form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult others – subject teacher, Assistant Heads, Deputy Head, Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep.
- Complaints made directly to the subject teacher, Assistant Heads, Deputy Head, Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep will be dealt with by the relevant member of staff.
- The member of staff dealing with the complaint 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 a week or in the event that the member of staff dealing with this complaint 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. Records will confirm whether the complaint has been resolved at the preliminary stage or preceded to Stage 2 and/or a Panel Hearing.

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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet and speak to the parents concerned, within two 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head 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 Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure. Records will confirm whether the complaint has been resolved at the Stage 2 or preceded 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 the Convenor, 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 Convenor, who, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 15 term-time 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 3 days prior to the hearing. 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 at this stage. 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 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 by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person being complained about. The findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Head and the Governors.

Complaints against the Head

Any complaints against the Head must be directed to the Chairman of the Governors. If he cannot resolve the problem immediately he may refer the matter to the panel.

Complaints by pupils

- The principles of this policy also apply to complaints made by pupils. However there may be some adaptations.
- Pupils should be able to raise concerns with any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable, whether it be the class or form teacher, support staff, senior staff or Head.
- Complaints that appear trivial need to be handled seriously as it may be an indication of something underlying and more serious.
- Pupils may need support from a friend or another adult.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to explore the issue of complaints, fair treatment for all, supporting and mentoring others in the Personal Social and Health Education programme.

How we record a complaint

The school keeps a record of all formal complaints which contains the following information: -

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Brief statement of issue
- Staff member handling the issue
- Brief statement of outcome (and whether complaint was resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing)
- Location of file holding detailed evidence (where appropriate)

A written record will be kept of complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or progress to a panel hearing and of action taken by the school as a result of those complaints, whether or not they were upheld.

Ofsted/ISI will be provided, 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.

There were two formal complaints raised with the school in the academic year 2015 - 16.
There have been no formal complaints raised with the school in the past academic year 2016 – 17.

Confidentiality

- Parents 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 162A of the 2002 Act request access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.
- Records of complaints are kept securely in the school office for a period of three years.

Contacts

Parents may make a complaint against the school directly to Ofsted, Independent Schools Inspectorate or the Chairman of Governors at the following contacts:

Chairman of Governors	Mr Ian Katté	01483 760065	via clerk@hoebridgeschool.co.uk
ISI		02076000100	complaints@isi.net
Ofsted		08456 404045	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk