

LYONSDOWN WHOLE SCHOOL, INCLUDING EYFS, BREAKFAST CLUB AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE CLUB – COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Governors and staff of Lyonsdown School believe that the School should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Whilst no longer a requirement, the school recognises the importance of the key elements for Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the outcomes outlined within it to help children achieve more. DfE (2013).

To be Healthy
To Stay Safe
To Enjoy and Achieve
To Make a Positive Contribution
To Achieve Economic Well-being

This policy is made available to parents of pupils in the Parent Pupil Handbook, issued when a child joins the school, on the school website. A hard copy can also be requested via the school office.

Policy Statement

This School believes that if anyone wishes to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. This Policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments are taken seriously. The School supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be resolved by the complainant and the School.

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 requests access to them.

Introduction

The 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 Policy.

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/Subject teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form/Subject teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult the Head of Lower School, the Deputy Head or in turn the Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head or Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form/Subject teacher unless the Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form/Subject teacher, Head of Lower School, Deputy Head or the Head will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved, normally within 14 working days, or in the event that the Form/Subject teacher, Head of Lower School, Deputy Head or Head 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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will contact the parents concerned, normally within seven working days of receiving the complaint, but in any case normally not more than 28 working days 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 her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

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 Chair of the Governors who is the appointed Governor for calling 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 Leadership and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of Governors on behalf of the Panel. The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable (and normally before 14 working days), but in any case normally not more than 28 working days after the complaint has been acknowledged.
- 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 seven 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.
- 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 that it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall normally complete before 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 provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor (Chair of Governors) and the Head.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

For parents of pupils within EYFS although procedures found in Stages 1, 2 and 3 above will be followed the process must be completed within 28 days from beginning to end, so that the complainant is notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

A record of complaints is kept for at least 3 years for any pupil in the EYFS. Parents of pupils in the EYFS may also contact Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) or ISI (The Independent Schools' Inspectorate) to make a complaint should they wish.

Ofsted may be contacted by writing or e-mailing or ringing: Ofsted, Royal Exchange Buildings, St. Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA, enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk, tel: 0845 6014772 (8am – 6pm Monday – Friday).

Independent Schools Inspectorate may be contacted by writing or e-mailing or ringing: ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA, durell.barnes@isi.net, 020 7600 0100.

All outcomes of complaints will be notified to the complainant within 28 days of the school receiving the complaint.

Upon request a written record of all complaints and the action taken will be provided by the School to ISI and Ofsted.

Final Statement

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. A written record of all complaints will be kept whether they are resolved at a preliminary stage of proceedings to a panel hearing. This written record will be reviewed regularly by the Head. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

Review Date: In line with regulatory requirements

Last ratified: 3rd December 2013

Ratification responsibility of the Legal Sub-Committee – Autumn annually if amended

APPENDIX:

Number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the academic year 2014/15:

None