



Glendower Preparatory School

Parental Complaints Procedure

2019–2020

Reviewed NKM October 2019

Next review October 2020

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Prepared by: Nina Kingsmill Moore (Headmistress)

In discussion with: T.Hawksley (Bursar)

To be reviewed in: October 2020, when a further review will be carried out by the governing body.

Approved and ratified by the Governors after being supplied with the school's Parental Complaints Procedure and reviewing the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

This policy also provides for those children in the EYFS.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's following policies:

Behaviour Policy

Acceptable User and Information Security Policy for Staff

ICT Agreement for Pupils

Staff Induction Policy

Glendower Preparatory School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents (meaning those parents whose daughters are current pupils at Glendower) do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. This Procedure applies to the whole school including those children in the EYFS setting.

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 daughter's form teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parent's satisfaction. If the form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a member of the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Complaints made directly to the SLT may be referred to the relevant form teacher, unless the member of the SLT deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 7 working days or in the event that the form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be offered a meeting with an appropriate member of SLT.
- If, however, the complaint is against the Headmistress, the Headmistress will hear the complaint and respond accordingly.

- Should this still not produce a satisfactory outcome for the parent, they will be provided with a copy of the Complaints policy and advised that they are able 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 Headmistress. The Headmistress will decide, after considering the complaint, on the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmistress will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 working 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 Headmistress to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmistress will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmistress is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmistress will also give reasons for her decision.
- If the complaint is against the Headmistress, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Headmistress 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 and meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair will give reasons for his 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 Mrs Sue Kumleben, who has been nominated by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. In her absence the Chair will appoint an alternative Governor.
- Where the parent is not satisfied with the School's response to their complaint at Stage 2 and indicates a wish to continue to Stage 3, for compliance purposes the panel hearing will take place unless the parent later indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further. The panel hearing should, therefore, proceed notwithstanding that the parent may subsequently decide not to attend. If necessary, the panel should consider the parent's complaint in his/her absence and issue findings on the substance of the complaint thereby bringing the matter to a conclusion. The requirement for the panel to proceed does not prevent the school from accommodating parental availability for dates or for considering comments concerning panel composition.

- 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 involved neither with the management and running of the school nor with the operation of other independent schools. The Convenor, on behalf of the Panel, will 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 four days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may attend and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint 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.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 10 working days of the decision (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 in writing either by email or letter to the parents, the Headmistress, the Chair of Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will also be available for inspection on the school's premises by the Chair of Governors and the Headmistress.

Timeframe for dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within 5 working days 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 resolve the first two stages of any procedure within a period of 20 working days. Stage 3, The Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 20 working days.

Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure, 'working days' refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time.

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all formal complaints stating whether they are resolved at the informal stage, the formal stage or proceed to a panel hearing and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint

(regardless of whether the complaint is upheld). This record (which will be available for inspection on the School premises by the Chair of Governors and the Headmistress) will be kept for a minimum of three years and will include what action was taken by the school as a result of these complaints. At the school's discretion, additional records will 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 when the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 Act requests access to them.

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.

Glendower Preparatory School will provide ISI/Ofsted, 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 records of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

Parents of children in the EYFS setting may additionally complain directly to Ofsted and/or ISI if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Ofsted - 0300 123 1231 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

ISI - 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net

There were no formal complaints in the academic years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-18 or 2018-19.

Reviewed: Nina Kingsmill Moore October 2019

Next review: October 2020