

RED HOUSE SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy relates to all sections and activities of the school e.g. Main School, Nursery and Infant School (including EYFS), Wrap Around Care, Offsite Activities and School run Holiday Activities or Clubs.

The School does not distinguish between concerns and complaints. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School is seen as a complaint. If you are concerned about anything, then please observe the following procedure:

Informal Stage

Please suspend judgement until you have spoken to us. Children do sometimes misunderstand, exaggerate or do not convey the full picture.

Please speak, as soon as possible, to the member of staff most directly concerned before a minor matter becomes a crisis. The member of staff will always consult with Senior staff if this seems necessary.

In the Nursery and Infant School, you can always catch your child's class teacher immediately before the start of school.

On the Main Site, a senior member of staff is always available at 08.45 am in the entrance hall.

All verbal or written complaints will normally be acknowledged within 24 hours during term time. Following investigation a written response should be sent within 28 days of the initial complaint.

Formal Stage

In the unlikely event that this fails to resolve the matter, then please write to the Headmaster outlining the nature of your complaint.

The Headmaster will always meet with concerned parents, but the meeting can be more productive if he has been briefed on the matter, in advance.

The Headmaster will normally acknowledge receipt of a written letter or e-mail of complaint within twenty-four hours.

The Headmaster will normally meet with the parents making the complaint within 10 working days of receipt of their original letter.

Referral to School Council

In the unlikely event that this fails to resolve the matter, please write to the Chairman of School Council, c/o the School Office.

The Chairman will then convene a Complaints Appeal Panel to investigate the matter.

Upon written receipt of a request by the complainant the Clerk to Red House School Complaints Appeal Panel will write to the complainant informing the complainant that the complaint will be heard by the Panel. The letter will explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These must be sent in time to be considered by the Complaints Appeal Panel.

The Complaints Appeal Panel will meet within three months of receiving a written request by a complainant. The Complaints Appeal Panel is the last stage of the complaints process and is not convened merely to rubber-stamp previous decisions.

Parents attending the Complaints Appeal Panel may be accompanied by a friend, relative or adviser if they wish.

Individual complaints would not be heard by the whole of Red House School Council at any stage as this could compromise the impartiality of any panel set up for a hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint.

Red House School Council may nominate a number of members with delegated powers to hear complaints at that stage and appoint a Chair to set out its terms of reference.

The panel shall consist of three to five members, the Chairman as appointed by Red House School Council, a further member of School Council and a panel member independent of the School. Two other members of School Council may be appointed by the Chair, if needed. At least three of the panel should have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

Independent panel members should have some standing in the local community. In this connection serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background or retired members of the Police Force are considered suitable.

The Chair will appoint one of the panel members as Clerk to the Panel or engage a minute taker.

The Chair ensures that both parties will hear from the Complaints Appeal Panel within ten working days.

A copy of the findings and recommendations of the Complaints Appeal Panel will be:

- sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to both the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about;
- made available for inspection on the school premises by the Headmaster and Chair of School Council.

A written record is kept of all written complaints received under the formal procedure or heard by the complaints appeal panel. The record includes whether the complaint is resolved following a formal procedure or proceeds to a panel hearing. Any actions taken by the School as a result of a complaint will also be recorded.

Any correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State of a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The school also has detailed Procedures giving guidance to staff dealing with expressions of concern from parents. A copy of these internal Procedures can be obtained by writing to the Headmaster.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

The School will investigate written complaints relating to the fulfillment of EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Parents of EYFS pupils may make a complaint to the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate if they feel the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Ofsted
Picadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231
Text phone: 0161 618 8524

ISI
CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

Tel: 020 7600 0100

A record of all complaints involving EYFS children is kept for a minimum of three years.

In addition, parents of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children may make a complaint to Ofsted whose contact details are as follows: Ofsted, Picadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD; Telephone: 0300 123 1231; Text phone: 0161 618 8524 or ISI whose address is: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA.

The number of complaints received during the academic year 2014-15 was 7.