



BOUNDARY OAK FAREHAM
COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

PARENTS' COMPLAINTS & APPEALS POLICY/PROCEDURE

Introduction:

Boundary Oak School has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint or wish to appeal against a decision, they can expect it to be taken very seriously and treated in accordance with this Procedure. Any matter about which a parent of a pupils is unhappy and seeks action by the school will be treated as a complaint. This complaints policy and procedure is available to parents on the school website or as a hard copy directly from the school.

Who does this policy apply to?

This procedure applies to parents of currently registered pupils where 'parents' are all natural parents (married or otherwise); any person with parental responsibility; any person who has care of a child.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution:

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- If parents have a complaint or concern they should normally contact their child's teacher initially. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head as is appropriate.



- Complaints made directly to the Head or Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant teacher unless the Head or Deputy Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The teacher 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 7 working days, or in the event that the teacher/Head or Deputy and the parent **fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint or appeal in accordance with Stage 2** of this Procedure.

For EYFS pupils

- If parents/guardians have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's class teacher initially. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the teacher with responsibility for the Pre Prep School.
- The class teacher 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 7 working days, or in the event that the Class teacher/ Head or Deputy and the parent/guardian **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 - Preliminary Stage:

- 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 the parents/guardian concerned, normally **within 2 weeks** of receiving the complaint in term time for the Prep and Pre Prep School and within **10 working days** for EYFS pupils to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. Should the complaint be received in the holidays, although every effort will be made to deal with the complaint as soon as is practical, these time frames might be slightly longer, however the Head will have met the parent/guardian within 20 working days of receiving the complaint.
- 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, as 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 their decision.

- **If parents/guardians are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3.**

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing:

- If the parent/guardian seeks to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Proprietor, who may invoke a meeting of the Complaints Panel and Appeals Panel.

- Each of the Panel members shall be appointed **by and on behalf of the Proprietor**, and 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** ([see here for Advisory Panel](#)).

- The Proprietor, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint or appeal and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practical and normally within 14 working days of Stage 3 being invoked.

- 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 **2 days** prior to the hearing.

- **The parents/guardians may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person.** This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation will not be appropriate. The written record of complaints brought by an EYFS parent will be kept until the child is 25 years old.

- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint or appeal 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 as soon as possible after the hearing. The decision of the panel will be final. The Panel will write and/or send electronic mail to all participants informing them of the decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the Proprietor and where appropriate, the person about whom the complaint has been made and where relevant the person complained about, within 5 working days of the hearing. In addition a copy of the findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor and the Head.

The school keeps a written record of all complaints or appeals until the child is 25 years old, and of:



- **whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing; and**
- **action taken by the school as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld.**

Parents/guardians can be assured that 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 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

On request the school provides Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) with a record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

The Proprietor undertakes to solve a complaint or hear an appeal within a reasonable amount of time depending on the complexity of the complaint and any further investigations warranted. In the case of a complaint brought about by an EYFS parent, the school undertakes to complete its investigations and reach a solution within 28 days of the initial written complaint to the class teacher.

Unreasonable Complaints

There may be some complaints where, after following the above procedure, the school may deem it reasonable to refuse any further consideration of the complaint. Unreasonable complaints are those where, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school hinder consideration of theirs or other people's complaints. Factors which may be indicative of unreasonable conduct include:

- Refusing to articulate a complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought, despite offers of assistance
 - Raising a large number of detailed but unimportant questions
 - Making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues
 - Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
 - Complaints which cannot be understood, despite offers of assistance from the school)
 - Complaints made maliciously, aggressively and/or using threats, intimidation or violence
- Complaints manifestly unjustified, inappropriate, or an improper use of formal procedure
- Complaints that are an attempt to re-open a concluded procedure.

If parents are dissatisfied with the procedure at any point of the investigation or feel that intervention at a higher level is appropriate, parents may lodge a complaint with Ofsted (www.ofsted.gov.uk) and/or ISI (www.isi.net).



They are

**Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD**

**General Helpline 0300 123 1231
Text/phone 0161 618 8524**

**Independent Schools Inspectorate
Ground Floor
CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
London EC1A 9HA**

Phone 020 7600 0100

Current Post Holders

Proprietor – QV Education
Head teacher – Mr J Polansky
Deputy Head – Miss E Fownes

Reviewed: Sep 2017

Reviewer: Mr Polansky and SMT

This policy must be reviewed no later than: Sep 2019