



# Complaints Procedures Policy

This procedure is available on request to parents and carers of all pupils and prospective pupils.

## **Making a complaint**

### **Preliminary stages**

There are two ways to complain: informally and formally.

### **Informal Complaints**

Informal Complaints are when a parent makes a verbal complaint. We will acknowledge this informal complaint in writing to the parents within 48 hours. The matter will be investigated by the Head teacher, and a response to the complaint will be given within seven days. Informal complaints may be made to any member of staff at the school.

### **Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints may be made either [1] when the person complaining has tried to rectify the situation informally, but is not satisfied with the result, or [2] when the complaint is too serious or complex to make informally. We will acknowledge receipt of the written complaint within 48 hours. We will respond with our conclusion to the complaint in writing to the parents within fourteen days.

## **Appeals Stage**

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the response from Headstart School to a written complaint, the headteacher will appoint a panel of at least three people who have not been directly involved in matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of this panel will be independent of the management and running of the school.

Once the panel is appointed and a meeting date agreed, the parents/carers complaining will be informed of the constitution of the panel and the meeting date. The parents/carers are encouraged to attend this meeting and to be accompanied by a friend or other supportive person.

- After considering all the evidence available, and (if possible) listening to views of the complainant, the panel will write a report summarising its findings. The panel's agreed findings and recommendations will be published to the headteacher and to the parents/carers who have made the complaint, as well as to any member of staff named in the report. They can be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

This report publication will occur no later than two working weeks from the date of the panel hearing.

## **Timescales**

An informal complaint will be dealt with as quickly as possible, and a response will be made not more than one working week after the complaint has been made.

Formal complaints are also dealt with as quickly as is possible, and a written response will be received within fourteen days of receiving the written complaint.

Should the complaint reach the Appeals stage, Headstart will endeavour to arrange a panel meeting within one calendar month from receiving the appeal.

Approved by: N Dann Approved on: June 2013, reviewed June 2014, June 2015, August 2016, June 2017, June 2018 Review date: June 2019 Responsibility for review: Headteacher
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## **Records**

All written records pertaining to a complaint and the manner in which it was resolved are kept for a period of five calendar years. This includes records of whether the complaint was resolved at the preliminary stage, or after appeal.

All complaints records are confidential. Only the headteacher or a suitably delegated person has access to them before they are destroyed (after the appropriate period), except in the compliance with other legal duties.

Approved by: N Dann  
Approved on: June 2013,  
reviewed June 2014, June 2015, August 2016, June  
2017, June 2018  
Review date: June 2019  
Responsibility for review: Headteacher