



## PARENTAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

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### **Rationale**

Ayscoughfee Hall School will always take seriously any complaint that might be raised. If parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be treated by the school in accordance with this policy. The primary purpose of this policy, which is made available to all parents of pupils who are currently educated at the school, is that it deals with complaints; this can be any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school.

Throughout this document, any reference to action taken by the Headteacher also refers to any action taken by another Senior Member of staff deputising for the Headteacher. Any reference to action taken by the Chair of Governors also refers to action taken by a nominated designate Governor.

This policy applies to all complaints, including those made by parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Parents of children in the EYFS can make a complaint to Ofsted or Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) should they wish. Contact details are available from the School Office or the Headteacher.

### **Stage 1 – Informal**

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is defined by the regulations as a complaint. All concerns and complaints are recorded on a standard form which will record a brief outline of the issue and the action taken. All concerns are recorded and the outcome noted with the date on which the concern was resolved.

Please note that the procedures in this document are not intended to limit the availability of the statutory complaints process. Our experience is that in almost every circumstance, parents far prefer an informal and unbureaucratic approach, and it is in this spirit that our procedures operate.

If parents have a complaint, they should normally, in the first instance, contact the relevant class teacher. In many cases, the matter should be resolved quickly by this means to the satisfaction of all concerned. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult colleagues and/or members of the Senior Management Team.

Complaints made directly to the Headteacher or a Senior Staff Member will usually be referred to the relevant class teacher unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally. The class teacher/Headteacher will keep a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days, or where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint then parents should proceed with their complaint in accordance with the procedure in Stage 2.

### **Stage 2 – Formal**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parent should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher. This does not mean that the formal stage is automatically triggered whenever a concern is expressed in writing, for example, by email. Complaints will usually only progress to the formal stage after first being considered at the preliminary stage and only then if the complainant intends to escalate a matter to the formal stage. The procedures and timescales that apply to other stage 2 complaints will be followed in the case of a complaint being against the Headteacher.

In most cases, the Headteacher will speak or write to the complainant concerned, normally within five 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 Headteacher to carry out further investigations. Under the formal processes, the Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. In any case a response will be made within ten working days, unless a holiday period makes this impossible.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If the parent(s) seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors, or their nominated designate Governor.

The Chair of Governors will make the arrangements necessary to put the matter to a Panel Hearing for consideration as soon as possible. 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 management and running of the School. Parents will be allowed to attend and be accompanied at a Panel Hearing. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of Governors. One of the members of the Panel will be designated as Convenor who will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within twenty working days of the complainant making recourse to Governors. The Convenor will act as Chair of the Panel during the hearing.

The Panel will make findings and recommendations, a copy of which will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about and will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher. All parties will be formally informed of the outcome of the Panel Hearing as soon as possible but always within five working days.

A written record of all complaints will be kept where the parent is not satisfied and has gone to the Formal Stage of the process. A record will also be kept regarding if they are resolved following a formal procedure or have proceeded to a Panel Hearing. There will also be a written record of actions taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection of the school under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

### **Complaints Pertaining to the Fulfilment of the EYFS Criteria**

Written complaints made about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within twenty eight days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

### **Number of Formal Complaints:**

In the 2022-23 academic year the school received no formal complaints.

Parents are welcome to contact the ISI or Ofsted if they are dissatisfied or have concerns at any point during the Parental Complaints process.

### **Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)**

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

- Concerns about the school
- Concerns for the safety or welfare of a child
- Queries relating to safeguarding

t: 02076000100

e: concerns@isi.net

w: www.isi.net

**Ofsted (for EYFS)**

Government Office in Manchester, Piccadilly Gate, 26-32 Store Street, Manchester M1 2ND

- Concerns regarding EYFS 0300 123 1231

You can report a complaint by emailing [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or 0300 123 4666

The Ofsted helpline is open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm

For further information visit the Ofsted website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

***Any reference to the word 'School' implicitly includes all its associated clubs/activities including Kids Club. This policy also applies to EYFS***

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