

MICKLEFIELD SCHOOL (including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS))



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS POLICY

Micklefield School (the School) has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be dealt with courteously in accordance with the procedure under this Policy. This Policy is available to the parents of pupils at the School on the School's website, at the School and on request.

1 Stage 1 – Informal resolution

- 1.1 It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 1.2 If parents have a complaint, they should generally contact their son or daughter's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved to the parents' satisfaction in this manner. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult with the Head of Lower School for Lower School matters, the Deputy Head for Upper School matters, or the Headmaster.
- 1.3 Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head, the Head of Lower School or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher, unless the Deputy Head, the Head of the Lower School or the Headmaster deem it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. In this event, the appropriate 'line manager' will attempt to resolve the matter in five working days or as soon as is practicable.
- 1.4 Complaints regarding EYFS will be addressed within 28 days and the outcome made available. A record of complaints is available from Ofsted.
- 1.5 The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should a concern or complaint not be resolved within five days, or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parents will be advised to proceed in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

2 Stage 2 – Formal resolution

- 2.1 If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. After considering the complaint, the Headmaster will decide on the appropriate course of action to take.
- 2.2 In most cases, the Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- 2.3 It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations. These will be completed in seven days or as soon as is practicable.
- 2.4 The Headmaster will keep a written record of all meetings and interviews held in relation to a complaint.

- 2.5 Once the Headmaster is satisfied that so far as is practicable all the relevant facts have been established, he will reach a decision and the parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- 2.6 The written decision will be issued within 14 working days of receiving the complaint. If for any reason this is not possible, the Headmaster will write to the parents within the 14 working day period referred to above, stating the reason(s) why he is unable to issue his decision and informing the parents when he will do so, which in any event will be within 28 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- 2.7 If parents are not satisfied with the Headmaster's decision, they should proceed in accordance with to Stage 3 of this procedure.

3 Stage 3 – Panel hearing

- 3.1 If parents seek to involve Stage 3 of this procedure, they are to write to the Headmaster informing him of their decision to do so within 28 working days of receiving the Headmaster's written decision, whereupon the matter will be referred to a hearing before a panel appointed by, or on behalf of, the Chair of Governors.
- 3.2 The panel will consist of at least three persons who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One of these shall be independent of the management and running of the School.
- 3.3 The complaint will be acknowledged on behalf of the panel and a hearing scheduled to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.
- 3.4 If the convenor of the panel and/or the panel members deem it necessary, they may require (in writing) that further particulars of the complaint, or any other related matter, be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than five working days before the hearing. Any such further particulars received within five working days before the hearing shall be disregarded and inadmissible to the panel, because it may not be possible to provide copies to all parties within that timescale.
- 3.5 The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 3.6 If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint at the hearing without the need for further investigation. However, should the panel decide at the hearing that further investigation is required, the panel shall decide how such investigations should be carried out and by when they should be concluded. The panel will reconvene and, after due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, will reach a decision, and may make recommendations. This procedure will be completed within 14 days of the first hearing wherever possible, but in any event within 28 days unless otherwise agreed with the parents. The panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision together with the reasons. The decision of the panel will be final.
- 3.7 The panel's findings and recommendations or action points (if any) will be sent in writing to the Headmaster, Chair of Governors and, where the complaint relates to an individual, to that individual. These findings are available on the School premises via the Headmaster or Chair of Governors.

- 3.8 Provision will be made for a written record to be kept of all complaints for at least three years, and whether or not they proceeded to a panel hearing.
- 3.9 Parents of EYFS pupils may, if the matter is not resolved, make a formal complaint to the Independent Schools Inspectorate, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA and/or to Ofsted, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE.
- 3.10 Parents can be assured that the School will treat all complaints and concerns seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003; by the Department for Education; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.
- 3.11 If the complaint concerns the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors can be contacted through the School Office. It would be hoped that matters could be resolved amicably before this stage was reached and all reasonable steps were taken to come to a mutually satisfactory conclusion.

4 Monitoring and review

- 4.1 This Policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually.

Number of complaints in the academic year 2019/20 - nil

Mr R M Ardé

Headmaster

Mrs J M Hamilton

Chair of Governors

Reviewed: September 2020

Review date: September 2021