



MOORFIELD
SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Whole School Policy including EYFS



POLICY ON DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE SCHOOL OR ITS STAFF

INTRODUCTION

Moorfield School ("School") seeks at all times to be a community notable for its openness, professionalism and sense of justice. It is important that pupils, parents, staff and members of the general public who have a grievance should have the opportunity to express their views and feelings and that they should obtain a fair hearing and a prompt response to any complaint which they make. It is also important that School should have due regard for the rights of all who work for them and that any complaints against members of staff should be handled in an entirely professional fashion. When deficiencies are identified following complaints, School will take appropriate action to rectify such deficiencies.

School's procedures for internal complaints made by members of staff are contained in the Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures as set out in the Staff Handbook.

Moorfield's Complaints Policy is made available to parents on School's website. It is also available by request from the school office during the school day.

COMPLAINTS

A complaint is, unmistakably, a statement requiring a response. It is the expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. Any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the school is within the scope of this procedure.

Parents can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and sensitively. Parents can be assured that School is here for your child and that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you raise in good faith.

A complaint which reaches Stage 2 of the complaints procedure constitutes a 'formal complaint'.

POLICY

The basic policy for complaints, verbal or written is to deal promptly, thoroughly and professionally with them. Throughout this policy, reference is made to parents but applies equally to all complainants. A written record will be kept of all complaints and the stage at which they were resolved. This does not breach the confidentiality obligations referred to below.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's form teacher. In instances where subject teachers are concerned, parents may choose to speak directly to them. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the matter cannot be resolved alone it may be necessary for him/her to consult a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). If this fails to produce a resolution the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.
- If the complaint is about the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors.
- The Form Teacher will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received on the Pupil's Individual File. Complaints may be raised at staff meetings if they concern a child's pastoral needs.
- Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaints

- 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 speak to or meet the parents concerned, normally within 10 working term-time days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If the complaint is received during non-term-time, the Head will normally arrange to speak to or meet the parents concerned within 10 working term-time days of the start of the next term / half-term.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all correspondence, meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents and member of staff (where appropriate) will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his / her decision.
- If the complaint is against the Head, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Chair may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will, in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. The Chair will give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.
- Complaints become reportable if they reach Stage 2 of the complaints procedure. The number of such complaints are listed at the end of this policy and reported to parents on an annual basis.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. 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. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Governors unless he / she has been involved in Stage 2, in which case the Panel members will be appointed by the Deputy Chair of the Board of Governors. The Clerk to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 15 working term-time days. If the complaint is received outside of term-time, the hearing will be scheduled to take place normally within 15 working days of the start of the next term / half-term. The hearing will take place at School.
- 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 no later than five working days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend.. The member of staff (if any) is also entitled to be similarly accompanied. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- The Panel Hearing should proceed, even if the parent decides subsequently not to attend, unless the parent indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out and what the timescale will be which shall in all cases be reasonable. These details will be communicated in writing to all parties to the complaint.

- After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. The decision of the Panel is final.
- The Panel will write to the parents, normally within 5 working term time days from the date of the meeting, informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. If the parents have provided their email address during the complaints process then the notification to them will be by email. A copy of the Panel's findings will also be sent to the person complained about, the Chair of Governors and the Head.
- The School will retain a copy of the findings/recommendations.

EYFS

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. EYFS follow the above procedure. However, if parents feel that School is not meeting the EYFS requirements then they may wish to contact OFSTED and/or ISI using the following contact details:

ISI, Ground Floor, CAP House, 9-12 Long lane, London, EC1A 9HA L Tel: 0207 6000100

OFSTED – email at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk L Tel: 0300 123 1231

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

The Chair of Governors can be contacted by email enquiries@moorfieldschool.co.uk or in writing via the school office.

TIMEFRAME FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

It is within everyone's best interests to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the School's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 15 working days if the complaint is lodged during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

RECORDING COMPLAINTS

Following resolution of a complaint, the School will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing and details of the action taken by the School.

The School will made available to parents of pupils and provide, on request to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the Independent Inspectorate, details of this Complaints Policy and the number of complaints registered during the preceding school year.

Correspondence, statements, notes of conversations, records and findings/recommendations will be kept confidential except to the extent provided by paragraph 33(k) of Schedule 1 to the education (independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014.

Records of complaint will be retained for at least three years.

Moorfield School will provide ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

Parents may complain directly to ISI if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net

Number of formal complaints made in 2021 – 2022

Stage 2 = 3

Stage 3 = 0

Number of formal complaints made in 2022 - 2023

Stage 2 = 1

Stage 3 = 0

Number of formal complaints made in 2023 – 2024

Stage 1 = 2

Stage 2 = 0

Stage 3 = 0

Policy review by: The Head

Last Review Date: September 2024

Next Review Date: September 2026