



## **Complaints Procedure**

*This is the Complaints Procedure for Polwhele House which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage, Boarding and After School Clubs. It is published on our website for parents of current and prospective pupils as per ISI Guidelines.*

### **Introduction**

The school prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils and welcome comments and feedback as a development and learning opportunity. If parents have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

### **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 many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with personally.
- The Form Teacher will make a written record of all comments, concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 2 weeks or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent 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**

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will meet with and speak to the parents concerned, normally within seven 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so 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 Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this Procedure.

### **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 Convenor” (The Bursar & Clerk to the Managing Council, Mrs Deborah Mackay) who has been appointed by the Principals (proprietors) to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- A Complaints Panel will then be appointed on behalf of the Principals (proprietors).
- 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 Managing Council. The Convenor, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen days.
- 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 two 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. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 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. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel’s findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Managing Council and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- A written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or progressed to panel hearing is kept by the Headmaster.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by the Secretary of State (in practice the DfE) or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

### **Complaints Procedure for Early Years**

At Polwele House we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and their parents/guardians are entitled to courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestion on how to improve our setting.

### **Making concerns known:**

- Any parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the setting's provision should first of all talk over any concerns and anxieties with the Form Teacher or Pre-prep Coordinator (as stage 1 of School Procedures).
- If this does not have any satisfactory outcome within 14 days or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should put their concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Headmaster. An agreed written record of the discussion should be made. This is linking to the second stage of the School Procedures. Written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and complainants notified of the outcome within in 28 days of having received the complaint. A record of complaints is made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.
- The process moves into stage 3 if required.
- Parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage made make complaints direct to Ofsted whose contact details are:

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
**Telephone: 0300 123 1231**

### **Complaints Procedure for Boarding**

In addition to the stages above, parents and boarding pupils may contact the National Care Standards Commission (Care Quality Commission) regarding any complaint concerning their welfare.

Telephone: 03000 616161

Opening hours Monday to Friday: 8.30am - 5:30pm

CQC National Correspondence, Citygate, Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA

Pupils are not penalised in any way for making a complaint in good faith.

ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) requires that a satisfactory outcome or resolution is agreed with the complainant within 28 days.

All complaints are documented in writing and any responses made in our complaints folder and kept for three years. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available to parents upon request to the Head.

The ISI contact for complaints and appeals is:

[concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)  
020 7600 0100

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**Review date:** According to the school's three-year policy review cycle