

## **Complaints Procedure**

St Andrew's has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided for its pupils. However, if parents do 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 the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, form matters with the tutors, or sports concerns with the Head of PE. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form teacher or tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for the Deputy Head to be consulted. Indeed, parents may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example, the Deputy Head or Head.

The person dealing with the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received.

If a parent has made a complaint or a suggestion in writing, the School will contact the parent within five working days to respond to the concerns and explain how the School proposes to proceed. In many circumstances, the person contacted will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. The parent will be given a date by which time they will receive a response.

If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to the parent as quickly as possible. This will tell the parent of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or in the event that the 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 or speak to the parents 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 Headmaster 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 Chairman of Governors.

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 Governors. The Chairman of 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 days of the date of the letter of acknowledgement.

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 five working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person whose identity should be clarified at least three days in advance of the meeting. 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 it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven working days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors, and where relevant, the person complained of. **The decision of the Panel will be final.**

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and in confidence. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

## Appendix 1: EYFS

### GENERAL STATEMENT

It is the belief of the staff of the Pre-Prep and Nursery departments that parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. All staff welcome suggestions on how to improve the facilities within the department and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of either the Pre-Prep or the Nursery. It is anticipated that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired results there is a set procedure for dealing with concerns

This policy links with the Every Child Matters agenda, in that every child has a right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

### AIMS

The Pre-Prep and Nursery aim to bring all concerns about the running of the department to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties concerned.

### PROCEDURES

To achieve a satisfactory outcome, the following Complaints Procedure is operated:

How to Complain:

#### Stage 1

Any parent who is uneasy or concerned about an aspect of the Pre-Prep or Nursery provision should initially talk over any issues with the following members of staff:

- The child's class teacher
- Deputy Manager of the Nursery or Assistant Head of Pre-Prep

#### Stage 2

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should move on to making a formal complaint in writing to the Head of Pre-Prep who will investigate the matter quickly. The complainant can expect a written reply in acknowledgement on receipt of the complaint as well as some indication of how and when the complaint will be addressed within 5 working days.

#### Stage 3

When a formal complaint has been fully investigated, the Head of Pre-Prep should ensure that the person who made the complaint is informed in writing of the outcome.

#### Stage 4

If the person who made the complaint is still not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint they should contact the Headmaster in writing and request further investigation to take place.

## **Stage 5**

If the complainant still remains dissatisfied after an initial investigation has taken place, they are entitled to take their complaint to Ofsted.

Contact details for Ofsted are:

OFSTED  
Early Years  
Royal Exchange Building  
St Anne's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

NB

- A record of Complaints will be held for three years.
- St. Andrew's will provide Ofsted [and 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.

## **POLICY EVALUATION**

Evaluation and review of this policy takes place on a bi-annual basis. The staff work together to discuss any changes or adaptations. Throughout the year the whole staff are encouraged to feed back information and ideas regarding the implementation of this policy.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is the aim of the Pre-Prep department to ensure that there is a continuity of approach throughout the school with regard to complaints and the welfare and education of the children. New members of staff will be informed of the department's policy on complaints and be expected to deal with parents' worries and concerns promptly and politely.

This document was informed by reference to the relevant documentation issued by DCSF (DfES), IAPS and the East Sussex Local Authority including Every Child Matters, and refers to the guidance issued for the Foundation Stage. It is also in accordance with the school's policy on equal opportunities and child protection/safeguarding policies.

## Appendix 2: Boarding

All complaints with regard to boarding are dealt with in accordance with the School's complaints procedure. In addition to this it should be noted that:

- the complaints procedure is available to all staff and boarders, as well as to parents.
- boarders and their parents are informed by the school how they can contact Ofsted regarding any complaints concerning boarding welfare;

Contact details for Ofsted are:

OFSTED  
 Early Years  
 Royal Exchange Building  
 St Anne's Square  
 Manchester  
 M2 7LA

Telephone: 08700 0002288

- a written record is kept of serious complaints and their outcomes for regular review by the head or a senior member of staff.
- complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils (See stages 1, 2 and 3 above).
- Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

Author(s):	Martyn Ward (Deputy Head)
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References:	DCSF (DfES), IAPS, East Sussex Local Authority including Every Child Matters
Authorised by resolution of the Governing Body Representative:	Signature .....
	Name ..... Date .....