

PARAYHOUSE SCHOOL

PARENTAL COMPLAINTS POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with your child's Key Teacher or member of staff responsible for the area or action you are concerned about. If your concern is more serious, you may prefer to make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem promptly at this informal stage. Most concerns and potential complaints can best be resolved through informal discussion with the Headteacher or relevant member of staff.

The complaints procedure will only be invoked after every attempt has been made to resolve parental complaints using informal channels. This will include firstly the member of staff involved, secondly the Headteacher, and lastly the Chair of the Governors.

Headteacher Stage

If you are dissatisfied with the response of the member of staff (or the Headteacher if they have been involved at the informal stage) then you may wish to put your concerns in writing to the Headteacher as a complaint. You should make it clear if you wish the matter to be dealt with as a complaint.

The Headteacher will investigate the complaint and provide a written response. This will normally be within ten school days of your letter, but you will be kept informed if more time is needed to complete the investigation.

If your original concern was about an action by the Headteacher personally, and you have already discussed it at the informal stage, then you should put your complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors.

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Chair of Governors Stage

If you are not satisfied with the Headteacher's response, you should contact the Chair of Governors. The Chair's name is published in the School's Prospectus, and on the website (www.parayhouse.com) and his contact details can be obtained from the school office.

The Chair will investigate your complaint and, in most cases, seek to resolve the matter through discussion with yourself and the Headteacher. At the end of this stage the Chair will provide you with a written response. This will normally be within ten school days, but you will be kept informed if more time is needed.

If you are not satisfied with the Chair's response then your complaint can be taken to a Governors Panel.

Governors Panel and Terms of Reference

A panel of three Governors will be convened, and then elect its own Chair. The panel will meet to consider and determine formal parental complaints made concerning the conduct of the School and will have the authority to make decisions on behalf of Parayhouse School. The decisions will be made by a single majority of the panel and will be binding upon the School.

The Panel of Governors will call a hearing, the procedure for which should be as follows:

- Those making the complaint will speak first
- The panel will ask relevant questions to elicit detailed information from the Complainant
- Those complained against will speak next
- The panel will ask relevant questions to elicit detailed information from the person complained against
- Following the panel's questions, those making a complaint and then those complained against will be given the opportunity to make a short concluding statement
- All parties will be asked to withdraw and the panel will then reach its decision. This will be communicated in writing to both parties within three days of the meeting of the panel.

Notes for Guidance

The panel convened to hear the complaint will comprise the same Governors throughout in the unlikely event of more than one sessions being required, for example, because more information is needed.

The panel should meet within a reasonable and practical period of time from the date of the receipt of the formal complaint. If possible this should be within fifteen days.

The panel will invite those who have made the complaint and those who are complained against each to submit a written statement prior to the hearing. All written information provided in this way will be circulated to all members of the panel in advance of the meeting.

Both parties will also be invited to attend the hearing if they so wish and to be accompanied by a friend or colleague. Both parties should inform the Governors of their intentions.

Depending on the particular circumstances of the complaint, the panel may call upon other relevant parties to provide information.

There is no appeals procedure; all records will be kept in confidential files, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection requests access to them, for example the Police or a Child Protection Officer.

Sarah Jackson
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