

KINGSMEAD SCHOOL HOYLAKES TRUST LIMITED
Including Boarding and Early Years Foundation Stage

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Kingsmead School has always aspired to be a school with a Christian ethos and a caring, family atmosphere. This being the case most problems are resolved quickly and easily. However, if parents do have a complaint, they may expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- a) It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- b) If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child's form teacher or houseparent. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway, to the satisfaction of all concerned. If the form teacher or houseparent cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult the Head of Department (Infants, Juniors or Seniors), the Boarding Team Leader or the Deputy Head.
- c) Complaints made direct to a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher or houseparent, unless the SMT member decides to deal with the matter personally.
- d) The form teacher or houseparent will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 15 days and in the event that the form teacher or houseparent and 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

- a) 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.
- b) In most cases, the Headmaster will meet the parents concerned, normally within 15 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- c) It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- d) The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- e) 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 the parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- f) If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

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Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- a) If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to the particular person appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- b) 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 Governors. 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 25 days.
- c) 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 10 days prior to the hearing.
- d) 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.
- e) If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- f) 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 15 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 Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- g) 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 paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where any other legal obligation prevails.

EYFS Complaints

- A record of complaints will be held for five years
- Parents may wish to raise their concerns with OFSTED (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>) and/or the Independent School's Inspectorate ISI. (www.isi.net/)

Boarding Pupils

- The complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to all staff and boarders.
- Boarders and their parents are informed by the school how they can contact Ofsted regarding any complaints concerning boarding welfare.
- A written record is kept of serious complaints and their outcomes for regular review by the head or a senior member of staff

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- Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay.
- Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.
- Details of parents may appeal against a decision made by the school about their complaint.

Unresolved complaints

- If, after the school has sought to resolve a complaint in a way that best balances the rights and duties of pupils, the complainant is not satisfied, the pupil may contact the Rev J. Nash, the school governor responsible for boarding.
(jdncash@gmail.com) Tel: 01772 723065
- Parents may wish to raise their concerns with
OFSTED
Building C
Cumberland Place
Park Row
Nottingham
NG1 6HJ Tel: 08456 404040
- (www.ofsted.gov.uk) and/or the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI)
www.isi.net/.
- Parents may wish to raise their concerns with the Local Authority Designated Officer regarding any complaint concerning the welfare of pupils.
Helen Saffer
Area Team Leader
Children and Young People's Department, Wirral
Hamilton Building
Conway Street
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 4FD

Conclusion

Parents can be assured that all concerns 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 paragraph 6 (2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

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Appendix For complaints relating to Foundation Stage
or after school care provided to children aged 8 or below.

Complaints relating to the categories of children mentioned above must be dealt with using the “Provider Complaints Record”, a copy of which is attached.

Staff members are asked to note the following points as they fill in the complaints record:

1. When completing the record you should bear in mind it must be shared with any parent who asks to see it as well as with Ofsted. It is important to maintain appropriate confidentiality when filling in the record. This means that you should not name the person making the complaint or any persons (adults or children) that relate to the complaint.
2. The record is intended only for complaints relating to the national standards. You must record here one or more national standards to which the complaint refers. If you are unsure you should refer to your national standards and the accompanying guidance. You must record all details associated with the complaint, taking care not to name individuals. For example, use “child A”, “staff member B”.
3. You must share an account of the findings of your investigation and the action, if any, that you took or you intend to take as a result of your investigations with parents at the school. You must do this within 28 days from the date the complaint was made. You can do this by sharing this record. If they ask you to do so, or if you think it is appropriate, you should send a separate letter to the parent who made the complaint giving more details.

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