



Westbourne
House School

CHICHESTER

COMPLAINTS POLICY

This is the policy of Westbourne House School, which incorporates the Prep School, Pre-Prep, Early Years Foundation Stage as well as provision for boarding

Policy Statement

The policy of the school is to treat all concerns and complaints seriously and confidentially, in accordance with the set school procedures.

Aims

Westbourne House has long taken pride in the quality of the teaching and pastoral care that the school provides to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Copies of the policy are available on the school's website in the Parents' Section, or hard copies are available from the School Office.

With due regard to boarding:

- 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 ISI 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. The record will differentiate between the academic and boarding provision.
- complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils;
- pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

With due regard to EYFS, we provide:

- a record of EYFS complaints are kept and made available to Ofsted and ISI at their request;
- a statement that the record of complaints is kept for at least three years;

- details for contacting Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD; general helpline 0300 123 1231; text phone number 0161 618 8524.
- Written complaints about the fulfillment of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days of the complaint being made.

Practice and Procedure

This procedure is based on the model recommended by the Independent Schools Council and meets the requirements of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Children Act 1989 and Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2015).

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 son/daughter's Form Teacher or Tutor.
- In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher/Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head or the Headmaster.
- Complaints will often be communicated by email and although this is in writing this does not automatically mean that this is a formal complaint. Complaints will only progress to the formal stage after first being considered at the preliminary stage and only then if the complainant intends to escalate the matter to the formal stage.
- Complaints pertaining to inclusive practices or a pupil's individual or additional educational programme should be taken to IENCo.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher or Tutor unless the Deputy Head or the Head deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form teacher/ Tutor 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 3 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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally **within 2 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint which will include date, name of complainant, brief overview of

complaint, action taken and outcome. This record will differentiate between the academic and boarding provision.

- 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 will be informed of this decision in writing. (Normally **within 5 working days** of the Head receiving the complaint) The Head will also give reasons for his/her 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 Bursar, 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, who shall be appointed by the Chairman of Governors, will consist of up to three members of the Board of Governors, not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Bursar, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working 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 3 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. 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 7 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents (sent by electronic mail or otherwise) 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 (by electronic mail or otherwise) to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person of whom the complaint was raised. They will be available for inspection on the School premises by the Head and The Governors.
- Records are kept of all complaints detailing whether the complaint was resolved following the formal procedure, or proceeded to a panel hearing and the action taken as a result of these complaints. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Parents and boarders can contact The Independent Schools Inspectorate at ISI, CAP House, 9 – 12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA. Tel: 020 76000100 or contact ISI via their website, www.isi.net.

Formal Complaints

- Formal Complaints received in school year 2010-11: **0**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2011-12: **0**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2012-13: **0**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2013-14: **0**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2014-15: **0**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2015-16: **1**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2016-17: **1**
- Formal Complaints received in school year 2017-18: **1**

Monitoring and review

The School will review and monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy (and appendices – if appropriate). This policy will be kept up-to-date and amended to take account of legislative and regulatory changes.

Last Review Date	Next Review Date	Reviewer(s)
January 2019	August 2019	Headmaster Head of Pre-Prep Bursar