



## KEW COLLEGE PREP

### Complaints Policy and Procedure

This policy applies to the whole school including the EYFS

This policy is published on the Kew College Prep website and is also available to parents from the School office upon request.

#### Definitions or abbreviations used in this policy

**EYFS:** Early Years Foundation Stage

**ISI:** Independent Schools Inspectorate

<sup>1</sup> **Definition of Normally** – normally anticipates a timeframe when the school is open. Should a complaint be made in the holidays or close to the closure of the school, then a suitable timeframe will be discussed and set between the parties.

<sup>2</sup> **Identity of an independent panel member** – the DfE has given the following guidance ‘Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired businesspeople, civil servants, Heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force might be considered.’

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. The Head and the staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, if parents have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Policy and Procedure. This Policy and Procedure is only for parents who currently have children at the school. The school has adopted the same process for exclusion appeals.

## 2 AIMS

The primary purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to deal with complaints. The Policy and Procedure does not distinguish between “concerns” and “complaints”. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is a complaint. Kew College Prep aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### 3 THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

#### 3.1 STAGE ONE - Informal Resolution

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education we provide at Kew College Prep, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before it affects the child's progress.

If the matter is of a more general nature, the parents are invited to discuss it with the Head, who operates an 'open door' policy.

The class teacher or the Head will keep a written record of concerns and the date on which they were received, and every effort will be made to resolve the situation normally<sup>1</sup> within **5 school days**.

Should the matter not be resolved within **5 school days**, or in the event that the class teacher or the Head fail to reach a satisfactory resolution with the parents, then parents will be advised to proceed to a complaint in accordance with **Stage Two**.

A written record will be maintained of any complaints from parents/carers of pupils in the EYFS and their outcome.

For any complaints received from parents/carers of EYFS pupils, complainants will be informed of the outcome of an investigation **within 28 days** of having received the written complaint.

If the concern is about the Head, the parents should move to Stage Two - Formal Resolution - and put their complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors who will conduct Stage 2 of the process. If parents are not satisfied with the response from that complaint, then they should move to **Stage Three** and request a Panel Hearing.

#### 3.2 STAGE TWO - Formal Resolution

This section sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. At this point 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. This does not mean that the formal stage is automatically triggered whenever a concern is expressed in writing, for example, by email but when the complainant states their intention to escalate the complaint to the formal stage.

In most cases, the Head will meet the parents concerned, normally<sup>1</sup> **within 5 school 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 dated records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head is satisfied that so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for their decision.

Where the parent is not satisfied with the school's response to their complaint at **Stage Two** and indicates within four weeks of the outcome of their **Stage Two** decision, that they wish to continue to **Stage Three**, a panel hearing should take place unless the parent later indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further. The panel hearing should therefore proceed, notwithstanding that the parent may subsequently decide not to attend. If necessary, the panel should consider the parent's complaint in his/her absence and issue findings on the substance of the complaint thereby concluding the matter. The requirement for the panel to proceed does not prevent the school from accommodating parental availability for dates or considering comments concerning panel composition.

### 3.3 **STAGE THREE- Panel Hearing**

**Stage Three** of the procedure applies when parents are still not satisfied with the decision. **Stage Three** of the procedure must be invoked within four weeks of the outcome of **Stage Two**. If parents seek to invoke Stage Three (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of a Complaints Panel. At this point they should put their complaint in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled the complaint so far.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for full consideration. The Complaints Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.<sup>2</sup> One panel member shall be wholly independent of the management and running of the school meaning that they cannot be a member of the School's workforce or a governor and nor can they be otherwise involved in the management of the school e.g. a solicitor who regularly acts for the school. The Panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally<sup>1</sup> **within 10 school 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 **5 school days** prior to the hearing.

The parents may attend the hearing and may be accompanied by another person. This may be a relative, teacher or a friend; it should be noted that legal representation would not be appropriate. If possible, the Panel will resolve the 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make findings and recommendations, which it shall complete normally<sup>1</sup> **within 5 working days** of the hearing.

The Panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent by electronic mail and in writing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. The findings will also

be made available for inspection on the School premises by the Head and the Chair of the Governors. The decision of the Panel will be final.

#### 4 ALL COMPLAINTS

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously. A written record will be kept of all complaints made in writing under the formal part of the procedure, stating whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceeded to a panel hearing and the action taken by the school following these complaints regardless of whether they have been upheld. Correspondence, statements and records will be 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.

#### 5 COMPLAINTS WITHIN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (Nursery and Kindergarten)

The above procedures also apply to complaints within the EYFS department. In addition to the procedures outlined above, parents of children in EYFS have the right to contact Ofsted and/or ISI (the Independent School Inspectorate) **if they feel that the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements - not for other complaints.**

Any written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI upon request and be held in the EYFS department of the School for at least three years.

**For complaints concerning non-fulfilment of the EYFS requirements only**, Ofsted can be contacted on **0300 123 4666** quoting our reference number 3186056. Alternatively, parents can write to:

Early Years, Ofsted,  
Piccadilly Gate,  
Store St,  
Manchester M1 2WD

ISI can be contacted on **020 7710 9900** or email [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net) or in writing to:

ISI  
9-12 Long Lane  
CAP House  
London  
EC1A 9HA

**There were no formal complaints received in the last academic year, 2022-2023**

<b>Reviewed by:</b> The Full governing body  Date: 17 Nov 2020	<b>Approved by:</b> Name: Jane Bond  Title: Head  Date: 1 Sep 2023	<b>Updated by:</b> Name: Jane Bond  Title: Head  Date: 1 Sep 2023
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This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every 3 years or earlier if it is considered necessary.