



CLEVE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL & PRESCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

This procedure applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS

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Created February 2018

Date for revision October 2024

Safeguarding Officer –C Fraser, Z Riach, K Ashe (EYFS)

The complaints procedure at Cleve House International School and Preschool has three stages, to be covered in a period of 28 days excluding school holidays and weekends between the complaint being made and the final resolution. The DfE does not distinguish between a 'concern' and a 'complaint'. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is considered as a complaint and will be addressed in accordance with this policy. In this respect, it is anticipated that the large majority of complaints will be resolved at the informal stage.

The school will keep records of complaints which are resolved at the informal stage for management purposes, for example to enable patterns or trends to be monitored. **A record will be kept of all complaints regardless of whether they were withheld or not.** A formal written and/or electronic record is kept of complaints made to the school which reach the formal stage.

Details will be recorded of

- whether the complaint was resolved following the formal stage or proceeded to a panel
- action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

A record of complaints made to the school is kept – along with the stage at which the complaint was resolved. Records are kept for at least three years. The school will provide ISI and Ofsted, 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.

Stage 1 - Informal complaint (Resolution within 5 working days):

All complaints may be made on an informal basis initially; verbally or in writing. Sections A-F deal with any informal complaints. In many instances issues will be dealt with straight away. Where further information is required every effort will be made to make an initial response within 24 hours of the issue being raised.

A Complaints by parents about a member of staff:

- i. Direct discussion with parents and Headteacher
- ii. Direct discussion with member of staff followed by conversation between member of staff and parents and aggrieved parties
- iii. Action on points raised agreed
- iv. Review situation

B Complaints by parents about another child:

- i. Class teacher involved immediately.

- ii. If necessary, playground supervisors involved and class teacher to observe in the playground.
- iii. All teachers are informed at staff meetings for classroom awareness.
- iv. "Complaining" parents telephoned; procedures explained; offered opportunity to talk further and asked to telephone immediately with any further/future concerns.
- v. Conflict noted on children's profiles and SLT ensure where possible that class teacher/tutor mitigates conflicts.
- vi. In instances of bullying the procedure is outlined in our anti-bullying policy
- vii. Where necessary steps will be taken in accordance in the school Behaviour and Exclusions policy

C Complaints by a child about a child:

- i. All parties are separately seen by staff, as a fact collecting exercise.
- ii. Staff are informed in staff meetings.
- iii. Parents are informed
- iv. In instances of bullying the procedure is outlined in our anti-bullying policy
- v. Where necessary, steps will be taken in accordance with the school Behaviour and Exclusions policies

D Complaint by a member of staff about a colleague:

This is usually made to the Headteacher either informally or in appraisal.

- i. Informally: the Headteacher discusses matter with member of staff and offers to intervene tactfully. Usually the member of staff chooses to speak to the other staff member him/herself. SLT ensure that situations likely to cause friction/ aggravation between staff concerned are avoided.
- ii. In appraisal; Procedures as above, though the complaint is noted. In order to maintain a happy community, all staff are asked by the Headteacher in appraisal, if they have any concerns
- iii. If the complaint is about the Headteacher the complaint should be made to the Complaints Panel.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaint (Resolution within 10 working days):

Where the complainant(s) are not satisfied with the response of the school, through the procedures outlined above they may register a formal complaint. This should be done in writing to the headteacher, including,

- The nature of the complaint
- The reasons for their dissatisfaction with the school's response

The Headteacher will meet with the complainant as soon as is practical, to discuss the matter and, if possible, to reach a resolution at this stage. Where a complaint is received during a school holiday, it will be deemed to have reached the school on the first full school day following its arrival. It may be necessary to carry out further investigations. The Headteacher will keep written records of all complaints, and of meetings held in relation to them.

Once the Headteacher is satisfied that all the relevant facts have been established, a response to the complaint will be made and the complainant will be informed in writing, within ten school days: the nature of the response will depend on the nature of the complaint but it will always give a judgement whether and to what extent, if at all, the complaint is justified, and reasons; the response may include actions which the school intends to take or a decision. A complainant who is not satisfied should proceed to the next stage.

Stage 3 – Independent Resolution - Panel Hearing (Resolution within 13 working days):

If parents are not satisfied with the Headteacher's response to a formal complaint, they can appeal to the Advisory Board. Such appeals should be lodged as soon as is reasonable following the Headteacher's response by writing to the Advisory Board setting out the matter and the grounds of such appeal. The letter of appeal should indicate when, in the following four weeks, parents would be available to attend a Review Panel.

- i. The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom is independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Advisory Board who will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 17 school working days. The independent panel member will be appointed depending on the complaint itself, to ensure that the panel member has the requisite skills and interests.
- ii. 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 days prior to the hearing.
- iii. One other person may accompany the parents to the hearing. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- iv. The procedure to be followed will be fair and flexible at the discretion of the Panel. If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- v. 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 13 school working days of the Hearing.
- vi. The panel will make findings and recommendations and a copy of the findings and recommendations will be sent to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

Parents of EYFS children can, if they wish, complain to Ofsted or ISI if they believe the school is not meeting EYFS requirements – contact details are found below **in Appendix 2**

Appendix 1: Number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the year 2022-23

Schools are required to publish the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

The number of complaints dealt with at this stage in 2022-23 was none.

Appendix 2

Contact details for

ISI, Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House

9 - 12 Long Lane

London

EC1A 9HA

Telephone 020 7600 0100

Fax 020 7776 8849

info@isi.net

OFSTED

By email

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

By telephone

The following helplines are open from 8.00am to 6.45pm, Monday to Friday:
general helpline **0300 123 1231**

By post

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Links to other policies - Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Appraisal, Child Protection

Manner in which complaints are handled

The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which—

(a) is in writing;

(b) is made available to parents of pupils;

(c) sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint;

(d) allows for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis;

(e) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (d),

establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to be made in writing;

(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;

(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;

(h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;

(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is—

(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and

(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;

(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and—

(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and

(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and

(k) provides that 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 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Last revised November 2023 - CF reviewed added manner in which complaints are handled. Advisory Board formed Nov. 2023

Date for revision November 2024