



St Wystan's

A REPTON SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs Karan Hopkinson, MA

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

NURTURE  INSPIRE  PREPARE  ACHIEVE

Last revised: **November 2019**

Next review: **October 2021**

This policy includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)



This policy is published on the website and is available in the School Office. It is available to staff in the New Staff Induction Handbook and is made available to staff via the network, and pupils and parents on request.

Introduction

St Wystan's School prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents or pupils do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated seriously and sensitively by the School and in accordance with this Procedure.

As a matter of daily routine, the School receives numerous contacts from parents and other interested parties. Some of these may raise concerns that are resolved simply by providing information or through the arrangement of an informal meeting. The procedure is likely to be concluded at this stage if the concern has been explained satisfactorily, or a shared understanding has been reached on the issue being raised. Where a matter is more serious, or an informal approach has failed to resolve the issue, it may then be raised, in writing, as a complaint. Under normal circumstances the school will not investigate anonymous complaints.

Dealing with Concerns or Complaints

If parents are in any doubt about whether a concern should be passed on, they should contact their child's Form Tutor in the first instance to discuss the matter.

Stage 1 (Informal):

It is hoped that most concerns and complaints (however initially communicated) will be resolved quickly and informally.

- If parents have a concern, they should contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straight away and to the parents' satisfaction. However, if the Form Teacher alone cannot resolve the matter, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Pastoral Assistant Head, Miss Law.
- Complaints made directly to the Pastoral Assistant Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher in consultation with the Headteacher unless the Pastoral Assistant Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter either be unresolved within 10 school working days, or in the event of the Form Teacher and the parents failing to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

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- All communications between members of staff and the parents are recorded on a Parental Discussion Form. Copies of these are distributed to the relevant staff, Pastoral Assistant Head and Headteacher.

Stage 2 (Informal):

- If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put the complaint in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the circumstances, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headteacher will normally contact the parents concerned within 7 working days of receiving a written complaint to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. Deviation from the normal timescales may be necessary during school holiday periods due to staff and pupils being unavailable.
- It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations. The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, noting at which stage resolution was achieved.
- Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Headteacher will give reasons for her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.
- Any complaints raised to Stage 3 will be dealt with according to the hierarchy outlined below:

Stage 3 (Formal):

- If a complaint cannot be resolved at either Stage 1 or Stage 2 then it becomes a formal complaint and Stage 3 may be invoked by parents. They should advise the Headteacher accordingly who will then refer the matter to a Governor appointed by the Board of Governors, to be responsible for the handling of complaints at this Stage.
- The matter will then be referred to the Governors for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons appointed by the responsible Governor. The Panel members shall not have been directly involved previously in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of the Panel members shall be independent of the management and running of the School.
- The responsible Governor will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a Hearing to take place as soon as practicable though not exceeding 28 days from receiving the referral.

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- 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 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 advise the parents concerned that this is required, and the Panel will decide how this further investigation should be carried out.
- After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel shall within 7 days of the Hearing reach a decision. The Panel's findings and if appropriate, any recommendations, will then be sent in writing by post or by electronic mail to the parents, the Head, the Governors and where relevant, the person against whom the complaint was made.
- A copy of the decision will be held on confidential file and be made available for inspection.
- The decision of the Panel will be final and binding on all parties.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied at the end of the above process, they are entitled to take their complaint to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and / or OFSTED. It should be noted that ISI will expect a complainant to have sought redress through the School's own procedure before raising a concern.

Arrangements for Record Keeping

Written records will be kept of all complaints, informal or formal, including whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or at a hearing and any action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) for at least three years. The written record of all complaints is reviewed regularly by the Head or a senior member of staff. Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils.

Confidentiality

The correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential except in so far as where a body conducting an inspection under section 108 109 of the 2008 Act, or the Secretary of State, requests access to the records or other documents involved in the complaint.

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The School may be required to declare the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the previous year to parents of pupils or prospective pupils and on request to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State.

Ofsted and/or ISI will, on request, be provided with a written record of all complaints made during a specific period and the action taken as a result of each complaint.

Parents can contact either Ofsted or ISI directly, if they so wish. The contact details are listed below:

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) CAP House 9 - 12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HA Telephone 020 7600 0100	Ofsted Royal Exchange Buildings St Ann's Square Manchester M2 7LA e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Telephone: 08456 014772
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Ofsted Office for Standards in Education
EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage
ISI Independent School's Inspectorate

Author	Headteacher – Karan Hopkinson		
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Date of Next Review	20.10.2021		
Amendments	Jul 2019 Oct 2019		
Governing Body Approval	Yes/No	Signed/Dated	
Website/App	Yes/No	ISI	Yes/No
Staff Handbook	Yes/No	Parent Handbook	Yes/No

Annex 1. Complaints

No complaints were registered under the formal procedure during the academic year 2018/2019. Formal refers to a complaint proceeding to Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure.