

NORTH LONDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Dealing with complaints

We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured that, no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents in addressing any problems that arise.

Problems sometimes arise from misunderstandings which are easily addressed. Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher. When parents and teachers treat each other with mutual respect and support, this provides a very good role model for all our children.

If, having spoken to the class teacher, you still have concerns, you should see the Head teacher. He will investigate the problem and discuss his findings with you so that we can find a way forward together which serves the best interest of both the school and your child. In the unlikely event of the problem remaining unresolved you can put your complaint in writing and, if necessary, could subsequently refer it to the Chair of Governors.

The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarized in the following stages:

- i. Informal Action
- ii. Referral to the Head teacher
- iii. Review by the Governors
- iv. Beyond the Governors

Stage 1: Informal Action

- i. Parents discuss concerns with the class teacher
- ii. If the teacher is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, phone number and date, and the parent is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated. The teacher may also consult the Head teacher at this stage.
- iii. The teacher ensures that the parent is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed and both parties agree on a timescale for resolving the problem.
- iv. If no satisfactory solution has been found, parents are asked if they wish their concern to be considered further.
- v. A record is made of this informal complaint regardless of the outcome. A note is made whether the matter was resolved or if it proceeded to the Head teacher.

Stage 2: Referral to the Headteacher

- i. The Headteacher acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days
- ii. A meeting is arranged with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given.
- iii. The Headteacher investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil would normally be interviewed with a parent present or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is not directly involved.
- iv. The Headteacher keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- v. Once all relevant facts have been established, the Head teacher responds. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- vi. If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the Governors.
- vii. The Headteacher must make a record of the complaint regardless of the outcome and whether or not the complaint was made in writing. The Headteacher will record whether the complaint was resolved at this stage or if they proceeded to a panel hearing.

If the complaint is against the Headteacher, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Chair of Governors.

Stage 3: Review by the Governors

- i. The Chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a Committee of two members of the Governors or/and Advisory Board and an independent person within 20 working days.
- ii. The Chair arranges to convene a Complaints Panel elected from members of the Governors or/and Advisory Board and an independent member. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible.
- iii. The Chair of Committee will write and inform all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and/or parent and the right to submit further written evidence.
- iv. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
- v. Parents can attend the Panel hearing, and if they wish they can be accompanied.
- vi. After the meeting, the Board will prepare a file of findings and recommendations and will consider the evidence.
- vii. A letter of findings, recommendations and decision will be sent to the Headteacher, the proprietor, the complainant, and, where relevant, the persons complained about within 15 working days.
- viii. A record of this will be kept by the Governors
- ix. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential (This does not apply to do requirement of the School to provide parents and other interested parties with information about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding year, nor to inspectors conducting inspections under Sec163 of the Education Act 2002, or to the Secretary of State, should they ask for access to such records.

Stage 4: Beyond the Governors

Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 2002 on the grounds that a Governors is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

In such case, complaints should be written to:

DfE

Independent Schools,

Mowden Hall

Staindrop Bridge

Darlington, DL3 9BG

The boarder can contact on OFSTED on 0300 1234 234.

Email:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 1234 234

Monitoring and Review

The Governors will monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher will log all stage 2 complaints received by the school, and record how they were resolved. These will be reported as part of the head teachers report to the Governors.

The Governors review this policy as necessary.

Review Date:
15 October 2017

Next Review Date:
15 October 2018