

## Complaints Procedure

<b>Date of implementation of procedure : September 2005</b>
<b>Date procedure became effective : September 2005</b>
<b>Review Date : September 2007, May 2009</b>
<b>Person responsible for implementation and monitoring : The Head, Second Deputies, the Head of Boarding, Early Years staff</b>
<b>Other relevant details : Child Protection Policy, Parents' information, Admissions, Discipline and Exclusions, Equal Opportunities, SENDA</b>

Felsted Preparatory School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns which they may raise.

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate

### **'How should I complain or share a concern?'**

You can talk, email, write a letter or telephone directly any member of staff. All members of staff will be happy to help. It is best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue - for example, to raise Form matters with the Form Tutor. They may be able to sort things out quickly. However, you may prefer to take the matter to the Head of Year, Deputy Head or Head. It may even be that you wish to complain to Ofsted or ISI. Their contact details are at the end of this policy. Boarders and parents of boarders may wish to contact Ofsted. (Please find contact details below) Parents of Early Years Foundation Stage may wish to contact Ofsted and ISI. in accordance with statutory requirements. (Please find contact details below)The School may need to show these inspection bodies records of any complaints and they way they have been handled.

### **'What will happen next?'**

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction and this we would deem to be a concern resolved. If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as

possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

### **'What happens about confidentiality?'**

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Head and those directly involved. The Chairman of Governors may also need to be informed. It is the School's policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children. Action which is taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

### **'What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?'**

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied you have the right to appeal, the Head will offer to refer the matter to the Chairman of Governors. Alternatively, you may wish to write direct to the Chairman. The Chairman will call for a full report from the Head, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. This may result in a positive solution, but if it does not, the Chairman will invite you to a meeting with a named Governor, Mrs Monica Curtis. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter would be dealt with under the School's conciliation arrangements, details of which are supplied when required.

We hope that in these ways we will be able to satisfy your concerns.

### **Conciliation Arrangements**

1. If an issue has not been, in the view of the parents, satisfactorily dealt with by the Head and Mrs Monica Curtis, they may refer the matter to the Conciliation Panel. They will be referred to **Mr J Davies** who as Chairman of the Governors will call hearings of the Conciliation Panel.
2. The matter will then be referred to the Conciliation Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of Governors. The Clerk to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a Hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.

3. 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 three days prior to the Hearing.
4. 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.
5. If possible, the Panel will resolve the Parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
6. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts considered relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations which it shall complete within seven days of the Hearing. In accordance with Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements, The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 28 days. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise to the Parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them;

### ***Pupils' Sanction Record***

Whenever a pupil is punished this is recorded. These records are kept in the Duty Books for school punishments which are monitored by the Heads of Year. Sanctions that result in a Head' detention or more go on the pupil's record.

### ***Complaints Log***

A central log is kept of all serious complaints in which the Head has become involved. The Heads of Year and Head of Boarding keep their own concerns and complaints log of anything which can be dealt with easily and immediately. The Head of Pre-Prep and her EYFS team keep a record of complaints for three years in accordance with statutory requirements and these together with any actions that were taken as a result of the complaint are available for ISI and Ofsted on request. These are forwarded to the weekly Management Team agenda, when deemed necessary, dealt with and filed.

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