



Stormont School

33a COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Last reviewed May 2020

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Published by Head

**The policy will be published on the website for current and prospective parents,
governors, staff and volunteers.
Hard copies are available from the School Office.**

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This document is designed to show you how to use our complaints procedure which is appropriate for the use of parents with children in Reception (EYFS) to Year 6.

INTRODUCTION

Stormont has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

One formal complaint was logged in the last academic year, 2019-2020. This complaint was resolved following the implementation of Stage 3 – Panel Hearing.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:-

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

PROCEDURES

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their daughter's Form Teacher or the Subject Teacher concerned. In most cases, it is hoped that the matter will be resolved informally and straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher or the Subject Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a more senior member of staff, for example, the Head of Pre-Prep, the Deputy Head or the Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head of Pre-Prep School, the Deputy Head or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher or the Subject Teacher unless the Head of Pre-Prep School, the Deputy Head or the Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher or the Subject Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or the reasons for non-resolution not be understood by the parents then the parents will be advised that they can proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the 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.
- In most cases the Head will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 3 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 taking up to, but no more than, 5 working days to do so.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, and whether the complaint is resolved following a formal procedure or proceeds to a panel hearing. The Head will also keep records of any action taken by the school as a result

of any complaint, regardless of whether it is upheld.

- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of 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.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.
- **Stage 3 - Panel Hearing**
- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the bursar, who has been appointed by the Board of Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The panel will consist of at least 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 will be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Governors. The bursar, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 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 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 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 will be completed within 3 days of the Hearing. The panel will write to or email parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the panel will be final. The panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing or by email to the parents, the Head, the Board of Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy of these findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Head.
- A written record is kept, for at least three years, of all complaints. This includes written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, and whether the complaint is resolved informally, or follows a formal procedure, or proceeds to a panel hearing. The school will keep records of any action taken by the school as a result of any complaint, regardless of whether it is upheld.

EYFS – Reception

For parents of children in Reception (EYFS) an official complaint may also be made to Ofsted and / or ISI (contact details given below)

OFSTED

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

General Helpline: 0300 123 1231

Textphone number: 0161 618 8524

www.ofsted.gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/private-schools>

ISI (Independent Schools' Inspectorate)

Ground Floor, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

Telephone: 0207 600 0100

www.isi.net

<https://www.isi.net/parents-and-pupils/concerns-about-a-school>

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and the following also applies:

- if there is a complaint about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, it will be dealt with within 28 days of the written complaint being received
- any complaints pertaining to the fulfilment of the EYFS must be available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

All parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints 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.