Kew Green Preparatory School

Parental Complaints Procedure (including for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Introduction

Kew Green Preparatory School will take every step to ensure the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. If a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School, they should raise the concern or complaint at the earliest opportunity and it will be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure. For the purposes of this procedure, concerns and complaints are treated equally and referred to as 'complaints'.

This procedure follows guidelines set out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements.

Initial complaints by parents will be taken seriously and parents are encouraged to speak to their child's Class Teacher as soon as an issue is of concern to them so that it can be resolved informally. A formal complaint is defined as any issue that cannot be resolved by the process of Informal Resolution as outlined in Stage 1.

The School will follow the procedure as set out below:

Stage 1. Informal Resolution

- It is our intention that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- Parents should normally contact their child's Class Teacher in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Subject Leader, Head of Section or Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to a Subject Leader, Head of Section, Deputy Head or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher unless the Subject Leader, Head of Section, Deputy Head or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The member of staff dealing with the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received and pass a copy to the appropriate Head of Section. Should the matter not be resolved or in the event of the staff member and parent failing to reach a satisfactory resolution within ten working days, parents will be advised to 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 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 meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five working 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 School to carry out further investigations. At Stage 2, the Headteacher will appoint an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team to investigate the complaint. The Stage 2 investigator will then make a report of their findings to the Headteacher.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parent will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for their decision. This will normally be within 21 working days following the commencement of Stage 2 of this procedure.
- If the complaint is about the Head, then one member of the Board of Directors will take responsibility for the investigation and response to parents. If the complaint progresses to Stage 3 (Panel hearing), this member of the Board can provide evidence to the Panel but cannot themselves be a member of the Panel.
- Any complaints about the delivery of the EYFS must, under EYFS statutory requirements, be advised of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Complaints Procedure.

Stage 3. Complaints Panel

- Provision will be made for a hearing before a Panel. The Panel will be appointed within 5 working days of the complainant's request to proceed to Stage 3. The hearing will then take place within a further 5 working days of the panel being appointed.
- At least three people who were not directly involved in previous consideration of the complaint will be appointed by the school's proprietors (Gardener Schools Group Limited) to sit on the Panel. At least one of these Panel members will be independent of the management and running of the school.
- Parents will be allowed to attend and be accompanied to the Panel hearing if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. If the parents do wish to be accompanied by a legally qualified person, acting in their professional capacity, they should notify the School at least two working days before the hearing.
- The panel will make findings and recommendations. The panel will ensure that the complainant, proprietors, Head and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint, are given written copies of these or that copies are sent by electronic mail. The findings and recommendations will be given to the relevant parties within 5 working days following the hearing.
- The whole formal resolution process must not take longer than 21 working days. This period would be measured from the initial request for formal resolution by the Complaints Panel to the issuing of the Panel's findings and recommendations.
- Complainants must, under EYFS statutory requirements, be advised of the outcome of any investigation within 28 days.
- Records of Stage 3 complaints will be available on the school premises for inspection by the Proprietor and the Head.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- Written records will be kept of all formal complaints which do not have safeguarding implications (those which were handled under Stage 2 or 3 of this procedure) and their outcomes for seven years.
- Where there is a safeguarding angle, records should be kept until the person accused has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.
- Any action taken by the school as a result of a formal complaint will be recorded, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld.
- The number of formal complaints received in the previous year is recorded at the end of this document.
- All correspondence, statements and records of complaints and their outcomes will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 10A of the Education Act 2008, as amended, requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails. Ofsted/ISI may request records of all complaints made during a specified period and the actions taken as a result of each complaint.
- The school recognises the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication. We acknowledge parents' entitlement to raise concerns and we hope to work with them in the best interests of the children whom they have placed in our care.

Persistent correspondence

- Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this can be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of this policy.

Directors and Complaints

The school has a genuine open door policy. Directors are always happy to talk to parents informally at school events and are eager to hear about their children's experiences of school life. However, such conversations are not a part of the school's formal complaints procedure.

If you have a particular concern about your child or wish to raise a formal complaint, you should follow the school's published complaints procedure by sharing your concern directly with the school (except in the case of complaints against the Headteacher which should be addressed to the CEO Mr Theo Brehony t.brehony@gardenerschools.com)

In the event of a complaint reaching Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure, at least one director will normally review the complaint as part of the Complaints Panel.

Complaints registered under the formal procedure in the past three years (Stage 2 or 3)

2022 / 23: 0
2023 / 24: 0
2024 / 25: 0

Independent Schools Inspectorate and Ofsted

- If you wish to make a complaint to ISI about the school, you can write directly to:

  Head of Communications,
  Independent Schools Inspectorate,
  CAP House,
  9-12 Long Lane,
  London EC1A 9HA

  or see information on the ISI website: https://www.isi.net/contact

- If you wish to make a complaint to Ofsted about the school, you can contact their helpline on 0300 123 1231 or textphone number 0161 618 852 or request advice by email on enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. You may also write to:

  Enquiries,
  National Business Unit,
  Ofsted,
  Piccadilly Gate
  Store Street
  Manchester M1 2WD

Written by: Managing Director GSG Ltd. (September 2013)

Agreed by the Board of Directors and made available to parents on the website.
This policy is available in electronic, hard copy and large print format on request to the School Office. Every effort will be made to provide the policy in other accessible formats as necessary.

Updated by: Headteacher (August 2025)
Next review: August 2026 or sooner if changes are required by ISI or DfE