

Oliver House Preparatory School Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1** We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Head and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.
- 1.2** If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to their child's class teacher immediately.
- 1.3** All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the PACT governing body if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims

- 2.1** Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The complaints process

- 3.1** If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter informally with their child's class teacher. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.
- 3.2** Where parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher or other member of staff, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should either telephone or email the Head, or make an appointment to discuss it. This appointment will be made within a few days. The Head considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.
- 3.3** Should any parents have a complaint about the Head, they should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.
- 3.4** Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in

writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Oliver House Director, who sits on the PACT governing body. As at the date of this policy this person is Mr Eamonn Doran and he can be contacted at 23 Herondale Avenue, London SW18 3JN, telephone 020 8874 1938 email eamonn.doran@linklaters.com. The Oliver House Director will acknowledge a complaint immediately whenever possible but at the latest within five working days. He will ask for a full report from the Head and any other relevant member of staff before responding to parents.

- 3.5** The PACT governing body, consisting of a panel of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. Where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one person on the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school. The panel will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint and will invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting and will allow the complainant to be accompanied at the hearing if they wish.
- 3.6** After hearing all the evidence, the governors will consider their decision and inform the parents about their findings and recommendations in writing within one week of the meeting, both to the complainant and (where relevant) the person complained about. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.
- 3.7** All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the proprietor (PACT Educational Trust Ltd), the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the 2002 Act requests access to them.
- 3.8** If we remain unable to satisfy a parent's concerns they may wish to consider seeking independent legal advice,

4 Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1** If parents with children in the Early Years wish to make a formal complaint against the school in writing, they can register their complaint with Ofsted. Their postal address is 3rd Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA. Tel. 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.
- 4.2** Parents with children in the Early Years can request to see complaints that have been formally lodged in writing against the school. These complaints will be kept for at least three years.

5 Monitoring and review

- 5.1** The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Head logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved (ie. at the preliminary stage or if it proceeded to a panel hearing). Governors examine this log on an annual basis.
- 5.2** The number of formal complaints the school receives in any academic year is recorded in the annual Head's Report to Parents.

Complaints Policy

- 5.3** Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.
- 5.4** This policy is reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Signed: C Candia

Date: 6 September 2009