

Argyle House School
Complaints Procedure
For All Departments (Including EYFS Department)

Introduction

The School 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.

Statement of Intent

The governor and staff of Argyle House School believe that we should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. The school recognise the importance of working within the framework for Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the outcomes outlined within it:

To be Healthy
To Stay Safe
To Enjoy and Achieve
To Make a Positive Contribution
To Achieve Economic Well-being

The School will make sure that the complaint procedure takes no longer than 28 days in total. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher then the matter must be referred to the School PTA Chairman or the school Governor who can be contacted through the General Office.

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 son/daughter's **Form Teacher/Teacher**. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the **Form Teacher/Teacher** cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a **Senior Member of Staff**.
- Complaints made directly to the Head Teacher will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher/Teacher unless the Head Teacher deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher/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 in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent **fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then 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 the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head Teacher will meet 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head Teacher will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head Teacher 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 within 3 working days. The Head Teacher will also give reasons for his/her 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 School PTA Chairman or the School Governor, who has been appointed by the Senior Management Team to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three people 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 Board of the Company. The School PTA Chairman or the School Governor, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 7 working 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 three working 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 representations will not 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 make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the 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 to the parents, the Head Teacher, and where relevant, the person complained of.

Argyle House School will keep written records of all complaints that are made in accordance with:

- Whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- Action taken by the school as a result of these complaints regardless of whether they are upheld.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 Act request access to them. The time taken to deal with each stage of the complaints procedure is assuming that the complaint is dealt with during term time. Complaints received during holiday periods will be dealt with as swiftly as possible.

Complaints relating to the EYFS Department can also be made directly to Ofsted at Piccadily Gate, Store St, Manchester M1 2WD

Complaints relating to the School can also be made to The Department for Education, at Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington, DL3 9BG

or to the Independent Schools Inspectorate, CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA