

NORFOLK HOUSE SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FEBRUARY 2011 (INCLUDING EYFS AND BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE AT THE SCHOOL)

Statement of Intent:

The staff and Directors at Norfolk House School believe we should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

The school recognises the importance of working within the framework of Every Child

Matters: Change for Children and the five outcomes outlined within it:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

Norfolk House School prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided for its pupils. However, if parents have a complaint they can expect the school to follow this procedure.

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 the relevant form teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved at this point to the parents' satisfaction.

Complaints made directly to the Head or other senior staff will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher.

The form 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 a week or in the event the form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed to stage 2.

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 consideration, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases the Head will speak with the parents concerned within 7 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 will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head is satisfied that so far as practical 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 her decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision they should proceed to stage 3.

STAGE 3 - Panel Hearing

If parents seek to invoke stage 3 following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, the matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.

The Panel shall consist of at least 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 School's Directors.

The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 21 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 7 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 at this stage.

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 it shall complete within 7 days of the hearing. The Panel's finding and, if any, recommendations will be sent to the parents, the Head and where relevant the person complained of. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails. The school will supply ISI and/or Ofsted with a written record of complaints and their outcomes on request.

All records of complaints are kept for at least 3 years.

ISI may be contacted on www.isi.net

To be reviewed in December 2011