



Norfolk House School

Complaints Policy

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1. Aims

- 1.1. This is the Complaints Policy of Norfolk House School (**School**).
- 1.2. The aims of this policy are to:
 - 1.2.1. set out a clear and fair procedure for dealing with parental complaints.
 - 1.2.2. ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in a timely and thorough fashion.

2. Scope and application

- 2.1. This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**).
- 2.2. It applies to all parents of pupils at the School. It applies to parents of past pupils only if the the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was registered at the School.
- 2.3. It does not apply to decisions taken by the Headmistress to exclude (temporarily or permanently) or require the removal of pupils from the School. This is covered by the Exclusion and Removal Review Procedure, a copy of which is available upon request.

3. Regulatory framework

- 3.1. This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1. Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2. *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DfE, Sept 2021);
 - 3.1.3. Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.4. Children Act 1989;
 - 3.1.5. Childcare Act 2006;
 - 3.1.6. Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); and
 - 3.1.7. Equality Act 2010.

4. Publication and availability

- 4.1. This policy is published on the School website and in the Virtual Staffroom.
- 4.2. This policy is available in hard copy on request.

5. Definitions

5.1. Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1. references to the **Proprietor** are references to the Board of Directors of Norfolk House School Limited;

5.1.2. a **complaint** is classed as any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School.

6. Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

6.1. The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2. To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Deputy Headmistress	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response and evaluating effectiveness	" " "	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	" " "	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Proprietor, Headmistress, Deputy Headmistress	Annually

7. Stage 1: informal resolution

7.1. The School prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided for its pupils. It is hoped that most concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

- 7.2. If parents have a concern they should normally contact the relevant form teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved at this point to the parents' satisfaction.
- 7.3. Concerns made directly to the Headmistress or other senior staff will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher.
- 7.4. The form teacher will make a written record of all concerns and the date on which they were received.
- 7.5. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or in the event the form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, the parents will be advised to proceed to Stage 2.

8. Stage 2: formal resolution

- 8.1. If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the parents should put it in writing to the Headmistress at which point the school shall treat it as a complaint.
- 8.2. The Headmistress will decide, after consideration, the appropriate course of action to take.
- 8.3. In most cases the Headmistress will speak with the parents concerned within 5 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 Headmistress to carry out further investigations.
- 8.4. The Headmistress will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- 8.5. The Headmistress will use all reasonable endeavours to conclude her investigations within 10 working days of receiving the complaint and will communicate her decision in writing to the parents within 5 working days thereafter.
- 8.6. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision they should proceed to Stage 3.

9. Stage 3: panel hearing

- 9.1. If the complaint remains unresolved, the parents should notify the Headmistress that they wish their complaint to be considered at a panel hearing.
- 9.2. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, the hearing will take place within 10 working days following receipt of the parents' notification. It will be held on a day during the school term when the school is in process, which allows for a

parent (or parents) to attend and be accompanied if they wish. However, it may be held during a school holiday with the consent of the parents.

- 9.3. The panel will be appointed by the Board of Directors and will consist of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed by the complaint. One panel member must be independent of the management and running of the school.
- 9.4. A copy of all panel findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, and will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Board of Directors and the Headmistress.
- 9.5. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, the panel hearing will respond to the complaint in writing within 5 working days of the panel hearing.

10. All complaints

- 10.1. All written complaints which fall under the formal part of the procedure will be logged and a note will be made of whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing, as well as recording the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- 10.2. 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 in accordance with paragraph 428 of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2017. The school will supply ISI and/or Ofsted with a written record of complaints and their outcomes on request.
- 10.3. ISI may be contacted via www.isi.net or on telephone number : 020 7600 0100. Its address is:

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

11. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- 11.1. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation

within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

- 11.2. Parents who have a complaint in respect of the School's EYFS provision (Transition and Reception Classes) may contact the Independent School's Inspectorate (ISI) as above or Ofsted in addition to following the School's procedure in the following ways.

By letter : Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD.

By email : enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk By telephone : 0300 123 1231.

- 11.3. A record of any complaint in respect of the EYFS will be kept for at least three years.

12. Training

- 12.1. The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.
- 12.2. The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.
- 12.3. The School maintains written records of all staff training.
- 12.4. Staff will be trained to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with pupils who are disabled. Staff will not be expected, unless medically qualified or trained, to administer medication.

13. Risk assessment

- 13.1. Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.
- 13.2. The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused. Please see clause 6 for details of the individuals with responsibility for carrying out, monitoring, implementing and reviewing the effectiveness of risk assessments under this policy.

14. Record keeping

- 14.1. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 14.2. The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.
- 14.3. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available from the School Office.

15. Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	January 2020
Date of last review of this policy	13.10.22
Date for next review of this policy	11.10.23
Policy owner (SLT)	Headmistress
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Chair of Directors