



Complaints Policy

It is our aim to provide an outstanding education for all our children. The principal and staff work hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers of our pupils. We are nonetheless obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that we follow in such cases.

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 the Headteacher immediately after school or over the phone. We aim 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.

The complaints procedure:

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 with the tutor or learning manager. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. Our teachers 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.

Where parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the tutor or learning manager or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the director's. The directors will consider any such complaint very seriously, and investigate each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Following an unsatisfactory meeting with the Directors, complaints must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send their written complaint to the board of directors who will arrange a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the directors and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the board of directors to include one person independent of the management and the running of the school. The school Business Manager will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 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 5 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 representation will not normally 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 may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 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 Senior staff member, the board of directors where appropriate and, where relevant, the person complained of. Should any parents have a complaint about the Directors, they should first request an informal meeting with him/her but if parents are unhappy with the outcome or the complaint is very serious, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.

The decision of the board of directors will be final except in the case of serious misconduct where complaints will be referred immediately to the police or Department for Children, Schools and Families.

A copy of the findings and recommendations of the panel will be sent to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about and made available on the school premises by the Headteacher.

Written records of all complaints and relevant correspondence and actions are kept including those complaints that are not upheld, and a log indicates whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential.

Monitoring and review:

The board of directors monitors the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved.

The board of directors examines this log on an annual basis.

The board of directors takes 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.

This policy is reviewed at least every two years.

What can I do if I am not happy with the school's response?

If you are still unhappy with the school's response and wish to speak to an independent body please contact:

- 1) David Lowe
Mobile: 07800907
Police Inspector acting as an Independent Professional

- 2) Cecilia Mitchell
Director
Hardwick House School
190 Forest Road
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3HU
Tel: 01509 218203



- 3) Brian Smith (Director) R.E.A.L. Education Ltd, 7 Castledine House, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8DY