



NORLAND PLACE SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY (Whole School including EYFS)

Reviewed: September 2023	Next Review Date: September 2024
Responsibility: PM (Headmaster)	
Location (s): SMT Drive, Parents' Handbook, School Website, Staff Drive, Staff Room Policy Folder	

At Norland Place, we take pride in our openness and in the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to our pupils. All staff at the school work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and take seriously concerns which they may raise.

Nevertheless, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. These apply equally whether children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) or Years 1-6.

Norland Place makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils through the school website. It is also available through the school office for parents of both current and prospective pupils. The school will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available, and the form in which it is published or available.

The following document sets out the procedure that the school follows. Timescales are given for resolution at each stage, however parents are asked to be mindful that these may need to be extended in cases where complaints are raised near, at the start of or during school holidays.

Aims and objectives

We aim always to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any concern or complaint. We give careful consideration to all concerns or complaints raised and deal with them as swiftly as possible, aiming always to reach resolution through dialogue and mutual understanding.

STAGE ONE - INFORMAL RESOLUTION

"I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me."

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 their child's form teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can try to resolve it.

"I am not sure whether to complain or not."

The school shares with you the best interests of your child and we encourage you to communicate with us sooner rather than later. If in doubt, please contact your child's form teacher, who is there to help.

"How should I complain?"

We are confident that most concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.

If you have a complaint, you should normally contact your child's **form teacher** (or, where applicable, **the relevant subject teacher**). This can be in person, by letter, telephone or email. In many cases, the form teacher/subject teacher will be able to resolve the matter to your satisfaction quickly and with a minimum of fuss. If the form teacher/subject teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headmaster.

The form teacher will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the form teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headmaster. The

Headmaster considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

“What if my complaint is about the form teacher?”

Where possible, you should still raise concerns about the form teacher with the form teacher. Often small matters of miscommunication or misunderstanding can be put right quickly. If you do not feel this is appropriate, then you should contact the Headmaster directly. Initially, this can be in confidence. However, the Headmaster is likely to seek your agreement to discuss the matter with the form teacher in order to deal effectively with the concern or complaint.

In all cases, the school is here for your child, and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you raise in good faith.

Timescales for Stage One resolution:

We will respond to complaints within five working days. Where further investigations are necessary, or if there is a school holiday, a longer time frame may be required.

For EYFS classes (i.e. Reception) we will investigate written complaints and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint, as required in paragraph 3.74 of the statutory framework for the EYFS 2014.

STAGE TWO - FORMAL RESOLUTION

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, you should put your complaint in writing to the **Headmaster**. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five working days of receiving the complaint if received during term time (and as soon as practicable during holiday periods), to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

Timescales for Stage Two resolution:

The Headmaster will inform parents of his decision in writing within fifteen days of the complaint being received by him unless an extension of the timescale has been agreed for further investigation or if there is a school holiday.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage Three of this policy.

STAGE THREE – PANEL HEARING

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to the School Accountant, who has been appointed by the Partners to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. The School Accountant, on behalf of the Panel, 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 normally not later than 5 working days in advance of the hearing.

The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

The Chair of the meeting will ensure that it is properly minuted. After the meeting, the panel will consider the evidence and a written decision, which will make findings and recommendations, will be sent to the Head, the complainant and, where relevant, the person being complained about, within 15 working days.

A copy of the Panel's findings will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

A copy of the Panel's findings will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the school managing partner/Headmaster and Advisory Panel.

The decision of the Panel will be final.

A written record will be kept of all complaints at Stage Two whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing. A record will also be kept of action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints raised will be treated seriously. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting and inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

In accordance with EYFS stipulation, records of complaints are kept for at least three years. The school will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

The school recognises the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication. We acknowledge your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children you have placed in our care.

Ofsted (EYFS)

If you have a concern relating to EYFS at the school, you can contact Ofsted on 08456 404045 or request advice by email on enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Alternatively, you can complete a form online at <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints> or write to:

Enquiries
Ofsted
Royal Exchange Building
St. Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

Independent Schools Inspectorate (children in Year 1 and above)

If you have a concern relating to children in Year 1 and above, you can contact the ISI by email at concerns@isi.net or by calling 020 7600 0100.

Number of complaints handled under this procedure at Stage 3 during academic year 2020-2021: 0

Number of complaints handled under this procedure at Stage 3 during academic year 2021-2022: 0

Number of complaints handled under this procedure at Stage 3 during academic year 2022-2023: 0