

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

For the parents of current pupils at Alleyn Court Preparatory School including those in the EYFS (Pre-Prep)



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Reviewed By: SLT

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# COMPLAINTS

## Introduction

This policy applies to the parents of current pupils at Alleyn Court and any former pupil who was at the school when the complaint was first made.

Alleyn Court Preparatory School has an excellent history of providing quality teaching and pastoral care. The Headteacher, Mrs H Sanders places great emphasis upon the importance of providing excellent standards at the school. On occasions parents may have reasons to raise issues that are not complaints but are in fact everyday issues which do arise as a matter of school life. In these circumstances Mrs Sanders would expect an informal resolution of the matter however, when parents do not believe that their concerns have been dealt with to their satisfaction the procedures mentioned below can be invoked. This Complaints Procedure is available to all parents and guardians of pupils and applies to all sections of the schools including EYFS. Access is available on the school's website and in the school office during normal school hours. Records of complaints are kept by the Headteacher/Chairman for 3 years.

## Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

The Headteacher and the Governors of Alleyn Court Preparatory School hope that most everyday queries and concerns can be resolved quickly and informally, as part of everyday school life. The first point of contact should normally be to the pupil's Form Teacher. On many occasions the issue will be resolved immediately. However, there will be occasions when it will be necessary for the Form Teacher to refer to one of the Deputy Headteachers; the Head of Pre-Prep/Head of Prep School.

The Form Tutor/Head of Pre-Prep/Head of Prep School will make a written record of the concern/s and the date on which they were received. Normally, the matter should be resolved within 7 working days. However, if the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the response to their concern/s, then they will be advised to formalise their complaint in accordance with the Formal Resolution.

## Stage 2 – Formal resolution

If the concern/s cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parent/guardian should address their complaint in writing to the Headteacher, Mrs Sanders, clearly stating that they are making a formal complaint. She will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take, which will normally involve a follow up discussion with the person making the complaint and any member of staff or child who is named in the complaint. Normally, the Headteacher will contact the parents to discuss the matter within 3

working days of receiving the complaint unless it is during a holiday period, when it may take slightly longer but would be within 7 days at the latest. In some instances, a resolution will be reached at this stage. Non-renewal of fixed term contract.

1. If the Headteacher decides that further investigations are required, then case resolution may take more than 3 working days and parents will be notified accordingly. The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the specific complaint. If a written complaint is received about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements, it must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.
2. When the Headteacher is satisfied that all reasonable attempts have been made to establish the relevant facts, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision and reasoning behind it either orally or in writing within 7 working days of receiving the complaint.
3. If parents are not satisfied with the decision, they can proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure, Complaints Board Hearing. To instigate this process, they must formally write to the Chairman, stating the grounds for their complaint.

### **Stage 3 – Complaints Board Hearing**

1. This constitutes the formal complaints procedure and any complaint dealt with under Stage 3 is formally documented as a complaint. Both the Chair, the Board of Trustees and the Headteacher will view such a complaint as extremely serious and will ensure that all reasonable endeavours are made to resolve the situation as soon as is practicably possible for all parties.
2. It is important to note that if parents seek to invoke Stage 3, following a failure to reach a resolution, they will be advised to refer this in writing to the Chairman of Trustees, Mr Graham Reeder at the school address. A complaint hearing of the Complaints Board will then be called by either the Chairman, or the Deputy Chairman.
3. The Complaints Board will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Two members will normally be Trustees and one shall be an independent person who is not a member of the school management or running of the school. Each member of the Complaints Board will be appointed by the Chairman of Trustees, who will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable, normally within 7 days but definitely within 10 working days of receiving the written complaint unless it is received during a holiday period when it may take longer to get all relevant parties together.

4. The Complaints Board may deem it necessary to obtain further particulars of the complaint or any related matter/s be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars will be supplied to all parties not later than 5 working days prior to the hearing.

5. The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation is not appropriate; however, the Chair will have the discretion to allow this if in their opinion it is thought necessary. In such circumstances the Chairman reserves the right to have a legal representative for the school present also.

6. If possible, the Complaints Board will aim to resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Board will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all of the facts, the Board will reach a decision and may take the opportunity to make recommendations, which it shall complete within 3 working days of the Hearing.

7. The decision of the Chair and the Complaints Board will be final. The Board's findings and if any, recommendations will be sent in writing, to the parents, the Headteacher, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, and if relevant, the person complained about. A copy of the findings and recommendations is made available for inspection by relevant authorities (ie DfE, local Authority, Inspection agency) on the school premises by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Headteacher.

## All complaints

### *Recording*

The written record of complaints is limited to all those made in writing under the formal part of the procedure, part of this recording will include whether they are then resolved at that stage or proceed to a panel hearing and the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

### *Resolution*

It is expected that the period from lodging of the initial Stage 1 concern to its resolution at the end of Stage 3 must not exceed 28 working days. However, during holiday periods the timescales above may vary. All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. All correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection (ISI or Ofsted) under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

As a general note parents may apply to the Chairman of the Board of Governors requesting details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure set out in Stage 3 during the last school year.

In the academic year 2023 – 2024, there was no formal complaint lodged.

In the academic year 2022-2023, there was one complaint received and resolved at stage 1.

In the academic year 2021 -2022, there were two formal complaints lodged. They have both been concluded.

In the academic year 2020 -2021, there was no formal complaint lodged.

In the academic year 2019 -2020, there was no formal complaint lodged.

In the academic year 2018-2019, there was no formal complaint lodged.

It is now recognised that moving forward the school will engage in a formal complaints procedure through to holding a panel investigation irrespective of the cooperation of the complainant.

A record of complaints is kept for at least three years by the school. Should parents remain dissatisfied and wish to make a complaint about the school, then they may contact Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the ISI for non EYFS. Contact details are listed below.

Contact details:

Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD [Enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 1231231

and/or

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI): CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA.

[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net) [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

Telephone: 02076000100

### ***Retention***

The school will retain information on complaints which do not have safeguarding implications for a minimum of 7 years. Where there is a safeguarding angle: 'Records concerning allegations must be preserved for the term of the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of allegation if it is longer.'