



# Complaints Procedure

## C17

**Dolphin School Trust**  
**inc. Noah's Ark Nurseries**

Reviewed by:	Sam Gosden
Last reviewed:	November 2023
Next review:	November 2025

## **1 Introduction**

This Policy applies to Dolphin School and Noah's Ark Nursery Schools. Copies of this Policy are available for viewing and/or downloading on the school's website or a hard copy can be requested from the Headteacher's PA.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

## **2 Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedure parents should follow should they wish to make a complaint.

## **3 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 their son/daughter's class teacher.

In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Senior Team.

Complaints made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant class teacher unless the Headteacher deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

The class 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 five working days or in the event that the class teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

### **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 Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headteacher will contact the parents concerned, within two 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 Headteacher to instruct the Senior Team to carry out further investigations before reporting back to the parents. In this case, a response should take no longer than a working week.

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

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

### **Stage 3: Complaints Panel Hearing**

If parents are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they may request that the matter be referred to a Complaints Panel for consideration.

The parents will be referred to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will appoint a Chairman of the Panel to call a hearing of the Complaints Panel. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, at least one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Panel members other than the Chairman, shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Panel in consultation with the Chair of Governors. The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within two working weeks.

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 two days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing. This may be by 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 the Panel considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within two weeks of the hearing.

The decision of the Panel will be final.

The Panel's findings and recommendations will be:

- provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
- made available for inspection on the school premises by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

### **4 Complaints about the Headteacher**

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, the complainant should write to the Chair of Governors, Ms Petronella van De Vliet at the following address: Dolphin School, 106 Northcote Road, London, SW11 6QW.

### **5 Record Keeping**

A written record of all complaints which are managed under stage two or three of this procedure will be kept by the Headteacher.

The record will indicate:

- whether the complaints were resolved following the formal procedure or proceeded to a panel hearing; and
- the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint is upheld.

Correspondence, statements and records 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.

## **6 Timescale for resolution of Complaints**

Unless additional time is jointly agreed between the school and the parents the following timetable should be adhered to.

- Informal resolution: One working week
- Formal resolution: One working week
- Appointment of Complaints Panel and submission of information: Two working weeks
- Resolution by the Complaints Panel: Two working weeks

Complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the outcome notified within 28 days of the complaint having been received.

## **7 Complaints to Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate**

Dolphin School is inspected by ISI, an independent organisation which reports to the Government on schools. Parents have the right to contact the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) if they have a complaint that has not been concluded to their satisfaction through the school's complaints procedure. ISI can be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or at the following address:

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**  
CAP House  
9-12 Long Lane  
London EC1A 9HA

Parents of Nursery and EYFS children who believe the school is not meeting the requirements of the EYFS may complain to Ofsted if they have a complaint that has not concluded to their satisfaction through the school's procedure. Such parents can report their concerns to Ofsted on 08456 404040 or they can write to the appropriate Ofsted office:

**Ofsted London**  
Clive House  
70 Petty France  
London SW1H 9EX

It is expected that complaints will go through the school's complaints procedure before Ofsted or ISI is contacted.

## **8 Approval and Review**

This policy was approved by the Governors. It will be reviewed every two years or as necessary following a change in regulation.

*Petronella van der Vliet*

**Mrs Petronella van der Vliet**

**Chairman of the Board of Governors**

Number of formal complaints 2022/2023 :0



## **Complaints Procedure**

At all times we aim to cater successfully for the needs of all the children at Noah's Ark. If at any time a parent is unhappy with our standards they should speak to the Nursery Manager. If the parent wishes to take the matter further the next step is to contact Mr Sam Gosden, Head of Dolphin School and Noah's Ark. If a parent feels the issue has not been resolved the School Governors can be consulted (Telephone numbers will be provided on request)

### **The Independent Schools Inspectorate Investigation and Complaints Unit**

If the complainant feels that the school has not addressed the complaint to his/her satisfaction he/she may contact the ISI. You can raise concerns by writing to ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, or to [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

You can also contact the Department for Education online or on 0370 000 2288