

Grangewood Complaints Policy

This Policy also includes the Early Years Foundation Stage and After School Provision

1 Introduction

Statement of Intent

The governors and staff of Grangewood Independent School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm.

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical, moral and spiritual development of the individual child. The school recognises the importance of working within the framework for Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the five outcomes outlined within it:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well-being

- 1.1 It is our aim to provide a good education for all our children. The head teacher and staff work hard to build positive relationships with all Grangewood parents. 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.
- 1.2 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 child's class teacher immediately after school or over the phone. If, after discussions with the class teacher, the initial concern or query cannot be resolved it is considered a complaint.

2 Aims

- 2.1 Our school aims 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.

3 The complaints procedure

3.1 Stage one: Informal Resolution

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 class teacher. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively and quickly in this way. Members of staff will always make themselves available and appointments will be made within 1-3 days. 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. However, if the concern is not resolved at this stage the class teacher will make a written record of the concern and the date it was received, the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage two of this procedure.

3.2 Stage two: Formal Resolution

If the parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher, who will consider the most appropriate course of action. In most cases the Head will meet or speak with the parents within 2-3 working days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations. The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Once the Headteacher is satisfied that so far is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and parents will be informed of this decision in writing within five days. The reasons for the decision will also be given at this stage. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Stage three: Panel Hearing

- 3.3 Following an unsatisfactory meeting with the Headteacher 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 Chair of Governors, who will arrange a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the governors 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 Governors to include one person independent of the management and the running of the school. The Clerk to the Board of Governors, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days of receipt of complaint.

- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- 3.7 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 Headteacher, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- 3.8 Should any parents have a complaint about the Headteacher, 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 in writing to the Chair of Governors.
- 3.9 The decision of the Chair of Governors will be final except in the case of serious misconduct where complaints will be referred immediately to the police or Secretary of State to the Department for Education.
- 3.10 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 for inspection by the Governors, the Directors and the Headteacher.
- 3.11 Written records of complaints are kept and a log indicates whether they are resolved at preliminary stages or proceed to a panel hearing.
- 3.12 Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6 (2) (j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.
A record of complaints will be kept for a minimum of three years.

The time taken to deal with each stage of the complaints procedure is assuming that the complaint is dealt with during term time. Complaints received during holiday periods will be dealt with as swiftly as possible.
- 3.13 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.

- 3.14 If parents believe the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements complaints can be addressed to ISI.

4 Reporting and Recording

- 4.1 In all cases it is important for complainants to use the school's complaints procedure so that records of the complaint and the action taken can be recorded and traced. Supporting documents should be kept with initial complaint.
- 4.2 The Clerk to the Governing Body will ensure that all correspondence, statements and records pertaining to the complaint are kept confidential and secure except where the Secretary of State or inspecting body under 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.
- 4.3 A written record of all complaints will be kept for at least three years and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.
- 4.4 The head teacher and chair of governing body will consider the handling of complaints from time to time and will discuss issues with staff where appropriate.
- 4.5 The head teacher will report to staff from time to time and to the Governing Body each term on the number and type of complaints received and their outcomes.
- 4.6 You can contact **OFSTED on 03001231231** or you can write to the **Secretary of State** (see addresses below) if you think you can show that the school has broken the law, or acted unreasonably. Unreasonableness in the strict legal sense means acting in a way in which no reasonable authority could act. You should include copies of any refusal letters you have, a copy of the appeal panel's decision and copies of any further correspondence with the school and any relevant supporting evidence.
- 4.7 Parents may make a complaint to:
- (1) **Ofsted** (Office for Standards in Education) by e-mail **enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk** or telephoning 0300 123 4666 (8am-6pm).
 - (2) **ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate)** at **www.isi.net** or telephoning **020 7600 0100**.
 - (3) The Secretary of State for Education. The final stage of appeal is to the **Secretary of State for Education**. Complainants should be advised to write to **The School Complaints Unit (SCU) at: Department of Education, 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD**.
- 4.7 Parents may ask to know the number of formal complaints received by the school in the last academic year.

Details for contacting **ISI – Tel: 020 7710 9900 or email: concerns@isi.net**

5 Monitoring and reviewing

- 5.1 The Governors monitor 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. Governors examine this log on an annual basis or as when deemed necessary.
- 5.2 Governors take 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.

- 5.3 During the last school year (2017/18) the school received no Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3 complaints.
- 5.4 The Governing Body undertakes a review of this policy every two years and monitors the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

5 Provision of Information

This policy is available to all parents and prospective parents on the school's website and for those without access to the internet a copy can be requested from the school office.

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Last Review Date:	December 2018
Reviewed	February 2019
Next Review Date:	December 2019

Signed:

Member of Governing Body: Date:

Chair of Governors: Date:

Please continue on this side if you need to.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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