

# **The White House Preparatory School**

## **Woodentops Kindergarten and Woodentops Day Nursery**

### **PREP SCHOOL and EARLY YEARS** **COMPLAINTS POLICY and PROCEDURE**

The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Kindergarten and Day Nursery aims to be a listening and responsive school. We encourage pupils, parents and staff to inform us of their concerns while they are still minor ones which can more easily be resolved. It is hoped that most concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School with care and in accordance with this Complaints Procedure. The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Kindergarten and Day Nursery makes its Complaints Procedure available to all parents of pupils [and of prospective pupils] on the School's website and in the School office during the school day, and 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 of the form in which it is published or available. This procedure is not, however, available for use by prospective parents – it may only be used by parents of current pupils.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the School as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff, and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the School is within the scope of this procedure. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the School has done something wrong, failed to do something that it should have done or has acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The School is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you [or your child] raises in good faith.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Kindergarten and Day Nursery will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

**Last academic year there were no formal complaints.**

#### **PUPILS**

- Pupils who have concerns or complaints should in the first instance talk to their Class Teacher or Nursery Key Worker.
- If the resolution is more complex, issues may then be passed on to the Headteacher, Head of Pre-Prep or Principal.
- A written record will be kept of all significant concerns and complaints, the date on which they were received and the details of the subsequent investigation.
- Pupils should always be kept informed, both of how the matter has been investigated and of the resolution.
- There should normally be an agreed resolution within 14 days.
- If parents become formally involved the procedure described below will apply.

## PARENTS

### *Stage 1- Informal Resolution*

- Parents who have any concerns or complaints should normally contact the teacher concerned (if it is an academic matter) or the Class Teacher / Key Worker (if it is a pastoral matter) in the first instance, either by letter or by telephone or in person. Staff will always liaise closely with the Headteacher or Principal when dealing with parental concerns and complaints.
- If the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Principal.
- We will endeavour to acknowledge such letters or telephone calls within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) of their receipt and to inform parents of how we intend to investigate the matter. This time frame will be longer during vacations.
- A written record will be kept of all concerns and complaints, the date on which they were received and the details of the subsequent investigation.
- A letter will always be written to parents as a “closure”, indicating how the issue has been dealt with and what the outcome is.
- In the event of a failure to reach a satisfactory resolution parents will be advised to pursue their complaint in accordance with the Stage 2 procedure set out below.

### *Stage 2 – Formal Resolution*

- Parents whose complaint has not been resolved by the Stage 1 process, the Headteacher will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. The time frame will be longer during vacations.
- The Headteacher and Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- Normally there will be a meeting with the parents concerned to discuss the complaint within 7 days of receiving it.
- The Headteacher and Principal will then carry out any necessary further investigations.
- Written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint will be maintained.
- Once the Headteacher and Principal 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 this decision in writing. The Headteacher and Principal will also give reasons for the decision.
- If the complaint is against the Head, the Principal will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Principal may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Principal will give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

### *Stage 3 – Panel Hearing*

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Complaints Panel.
- The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom is independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the school. The Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 21 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 7 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 7 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 Head, and where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made.
- The time frame will be longer if during vacations.

*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*

### **EYFS Procedure**

In the event of complaints regarding EYFS the above procedures. All written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

**WRITTEN COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EYFS:** The Whitehouse Preparatory School and Woodentops Kindergarten and Day Nursery 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 record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

**COMPLAINTS TO OFSTED REGARDING EYFS SERVICE PROVIDERS:** Parents may also complain directly to Ofsted if they wish. Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 4234 or by email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

**COMPLAINTS TO ISI REGARDING EYFS SERVICE PROVIDERS:** Parents may also complain to ISI if they wish. ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

### **Recording Complaints**

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints for three years, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

Written records will be kept:

- I. Whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- II. Action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph (k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

## **Policy will be reviewed annually**

Policy reviewed:	Sept 16	By:	Principal & Head teacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 17	By:	Principal & Head teacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 18	By:	Principal & Head teacher
To be reviewed:	Sept 19	By:	Principal & Head teacher