

# **The White House Preparatory School**

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

### **PREP SCHOOL and EARLY YEARS**

#### **Concerns and 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 Concerns and Complaints Procedure. The White House Preparatory School and Woodentops Kindergarten and Day Nursery makes its Concerns and Complaints Procedure available to all parents of pupils on the School's website and in the School office during the school day, and the School will ensure that parents of 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 concern or 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 concern or 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 concern or complaint that you raise 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 concerns and 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.**

#### **PARENTS**

##### *Stage 1- Informal Resolution*

- Parents who have any concerns or complaints are encouraged to raise these with the appropriate person. The Headteacher (or a member of the Leadership Team) welcome children and parents into the school each morning and often this is a convenient moment to hold a brief conversation. Class Teachers and Key Workers are often available also on arrival in the morning which provides for a different opportunity to raise a concern. If this is not appropriate or possible parents are encouraged to communicate (e.g. email) with the appropriate person who will arrange for a more appropriate opportunity to communicate directly e.g. by telephone or by meeting. Given the nature of our school and that it is a small school it is natural and expected that 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.
- During term time our aim is to respond, even if just to acknowledge receipt of the communication, within 2 working days. The 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 any consequent actions e.g. information gathering.
- Parents will receive a communication to indicate the matter has been resolved – this may be in person, by telephone, email or letter.
- Our aim is to resolve all such issues within 10 working days during term time. The time frame will be longer during vacations.
- In our experience most concerns can be resolved at this level and to the satisfaction of all involved. However, if it is not possible to arrive at a satisfactory resolution parents may wish to raise the matter to the next level by writing formally to the Headteacher or Principle which will initiate a Stage 2 process – see below.

### *Stage 2 – Formal Resolution*

- On receiving a formal letter of complaint, in writing (e.g. by email) the Headteacher will acknowledge receipt of the letter within 2 working days.
- With the Principal, the Headteacher will consider the complaint aims to meet with the parents concerned, normally within 7 working days of receiving the complaint. The time frame will be longer during vacations.
- Subject to the meeting with parents, the Headteacher and Principal will 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.
- The school will seek to conclude the Stage 2 process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The time frame will be longer during vacations.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should communicate this to the Principal in writing which will initiate a Stage 3 of process.

### *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 working days. The time frame will be longer during vacations.
- 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 working 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 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 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 apply. All written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 calendar 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) or in writing to Clive House, 70 Petty France, London, SW1H 9EX.

**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) or in writing to CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, Barbican, London, EC1A9HA.

### **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.

The Headteacher records all concerns and complaint in a Complaints Log which is monitored and reviewed regularly and available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor.

<b>Policy will be reviewed annually</b>			
Policy reviewed:	Sept 16	By:	Principal & Head teacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 17	By:	Principal & Head teacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 18	By:	Principal & Head teacher
Policy reviewed:	Sept 19	By:	Principal & Head teacher
To be reviewed:	Sept 20	By:	Principal & Head teacher