



## COMPLAINTS POLICY FOR PARENTS

### **School philosophy**

**At L'Ecole des Petits** we take pride in our conscientious approach to the conditions of our school and in the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to our pupils.

We work hard to build positive relationships with parents, and welcome suggestions and comments from parents. We recognise the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication.

We take complaints and concerns seriously when they are raised. In this instance, parents can expect to be treated by the school in accordance with this policy.

If as a parent, you have concerns, you are entitled to complain. We hope to work with parents in the best interests of the children placed in our care.

**A complaint is considered to be an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, real or perceived, which needs a response.**

### **Objectives**

We aim to ensure that:

- Parents wishing to make a complaint or voice a concern know how to do so.
- We respond to complaints and concerns within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way.
- Parents realise that we listen to complaints and concerns and take them seriously.
- We take action where we judge appropriate.
- We resolve any complaint or concern through dialogue and mutual understanding, and in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues.
- All complaints and concerns voiced are reviewed on a regular basis.
- We try to resolve complaints and concerns through informal resolution.

### **The complaints process**

- The member of staff first approached will ascertain the nature and seriousness of the complaint and, unless the complaint is minor and/or can be instantly dealt with, will make a written note of the details, including the date and time the complaint was made. Pupils and parents are encouraged to give their names if making a complaint or to voice a concern, and to record it in the "cahier de correspondance" to give to the teacher.



- If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education or environment provided in the school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with informally in this way. All our teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. Wherever possible, the complaint/concern will be sympathetically discussed and resolved by the member of staff concerned.
- Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headmistress. The Headmistress will consider any such concern or complaint and will decide on the appropriate course of action to take. It may be necessary for the Headmistress to carry out further investigations. Most situations can normally be resolved at this stage. In all cases, the school aims to do all it reasonably can to ensure that no complaint rebounds unfairly on any pupil.
- If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, and the matter concerns an issue of education or welfare going to the root of the relationship between the school and parents or pupil, then the Headmistress will take the matter to the School Principals (Board of Directors). Concurrently the parent(s) or guardian will be informed that they should write to the Principal within 7 days, fully explaining the complaint.
- The Principals (Board of Directors, two in number), will convene a formal meeting to adjudicate the complaint within 15 working days of the letter of complaint being received. The Board of Directors will invite one other independent person, not directly employed by the school, to attend this meeting. This body of three people will constitute the formal "Complaints Panel", and would not have been directly involved in previous consideration of the complaint.
- The Board of Directors may take suitable advice as they deem appropriate, and will fully inform themselves of the circumstances of the complaint. The complainant (parent or parents / guardian) will be invited to the meeting of the Complaints Panel and may be accompanied by one other person, where all best efforts will be made to resolve the complaint.
- The decision of the Complaints Panel given therein in their resolution of the complaint shall be final. The Panel will make available its findings and recommendations in writing to the complainant, head teacher and where relevant the teacher or person complained about.
- Written records will be kept of all complaints and their outcomes, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage when a complaint is submitted in writing, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.



## **Complaints about the class teacher**

Where possible, the parent should still raise concerns about the class teacher with the teacher himself/herself. Often small matters of miscommunication or misunderstanding can be put right quickly and simply. If this is felt inappropriate by the parent, then contact should be made with the Headmistress directly. Initially, this can be in confidence. However, the Headmistress is likely to seek agreement to discuss the matter with the class teacher in order to deal effectively with the concern or complaint.

## **Confidentiality**

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints raised will be treated seriously. 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, or where the school deems it appropriate to take advice. All correspondence, statements and records will be kept in a secure locked place.

Any parent is welcome to contact the school to request the number of complaints that have been received during the last twelve months. Our school recognises the mutual benefit to be gained from open and honest communication. We acknowledge any parent's right to complain and hope that together we can work in the best interests of the children placed in our care.

## **OFSTED**

If you wish to make a complaint to Ofsted about the school, you can contact their helpline on 0300 1234 234 or request advice by email on [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

To make a formal complaint, you can complete a form online at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school> or write to:

Enquiries  
National Business Unit  
Ofsted  
Picadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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**Reviewed Sept 2021**