



The Froebelian School **Complaints Policy for Parents**

How we deal with Concerns or Complaints

The Froebelian School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may rise. This policy is available, on request, to any parents of pupils currently registered at the school and parents of pupils who have left the school as long as the complaint was made before the pupil left. It will show you how to use our complaints procedure.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response and/or action from the school.

We wish to ensure that:

- All parents, including those with children under 5 (i.e. in classes Lower Kindergarten and Kindergarten, also referred to as the Early Years Foundation Stage) wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate

Three Stage Process

The school follows a three-stage process to address complaints:

- Stage One: Informal
- Stage Two: Formal
- Stage Three: Panel Hearing

Note: Ideally, complaints should be presented **within three months** of the action or matter of concern to allow effective and timely investigation to take place.

Stage One: Informal

'How should I complain?'

You can talk directly to a member of staff; write a letter, email or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. We will keep a written record of all complaints.

Any member of staff will try to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue - for example, to raise music concerns with the Music Leader.

However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example, the EYFS Co-ordinator. We will keep a written record of any complaint. At this, informal stage, we will

deal with your complaint within two weeks.

‘I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me.’

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Please contact a member of staff, as described above. The vast majority of concerns are resolved quickly and informally, although we will keep a written record of any significant issues.

‘I am not sure whether to complain or not.’

If as parents or guardians you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should contact the school as we are here to help.

‘What will happen next?’

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, you will be given a response as quickly as possible, normally within a week and definitely within two weeks. This will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed. We will keep a written record of this.

‘What happens about confidentiality?’

Complaints are handled confidentially, and the correspondence and written evidence relating to them will be kept confidentially by the school 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.

Knowledge of a complaint will be limited to the Head and those who need to be involved. The Chairman of School Council (governors) may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents should not reflect adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police. You would be fully informed.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints may not be pursued. Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

“Do you keep records?”

We maintain a written record of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at a preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. We also record any action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). Such records are treated as confidential (see above).

Stage Two: Formal

‘What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?’

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, you may write to the Head to request a meeting. At this stage, the complaint

will become 'formal'. The Head will respond within a week of a formal complaint being made and will seek to resolve any outstanding issues. Following consultation and/or further consideration, the Head will write within two weeks to explain the outcome. A written record will be kept of this process.

Stage Three: Panel Hearing

'If I am still dissatisfied may I appeal?'

If the intervention of the Head does not bring about a resolution, you may write to the Vice- Chair of School Council c/o the School Office, providing a copy of your letter for the Head (unless it is inappropriate to do so). The Vice-Chair will respond within a week and, if appropriate, will arrange for a panel to examine your complaint. The panel will convene within two weeks and will consist of at least three persons, one of whom shall be independent of the current management and running of the school, and none of whom will be directly involved in the matter of complaint.

You will be invited to a meeting with the panel which the Head will normally attend. You may be accompanied by one other person, but legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The panel will present findings and recommendations and these will be communicated to all relevant parties (e.g. the full governing body, the Head, the person(s) complained about and the person(s) who made the complaint). They shall also be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher. Following this review, the chair of the panel will write to you, the School Council and the Head within 28 days to explain the outcome and this letter will formally close the complaint.

Exclusions

Exclusions are not covered by the Complaints Policy but fall under the school's Admissions, Misbehaviour and Exclusions Policy. Exclusions may be permanent or temporary. Temporary exclusions will be for a fixed term and may be internally or externally applied.

In the event of expulsion or removal of a child being required, the Headteacher will advise parents of the procedure (of which copies are available on request) under which a written application for a review of the decision may be made.

Provision for children under 5 (the EYFS), Ofsted & ISI

Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education – a government body), and ISI (the Independent Schools Inspectorate) have particular responsibility for monitoring standards regarding the provision of care and services for children under five years of age as required by the EYFS Framework.

Having followed the steps set out in the rest of this complaints procedure (i.e. a written complaint has been made, investigated and the investigation outcomes have been shared within 28 days), if any parents wish to complain to Ofsted and/or ISI regarding the school's fulfilment of the EYFS requirements for children aged under five, they may write to:

Ofsted
Stockdale House
Headingley Office Park
Leeds LS6 1WA
Tel: 0113-2158400

ISI
CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
London EC1A 9HA
020 76000 0100

NB: We will notify any complainant who has complained in writing regarding our EYFS provision of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint. We will also provide Ofsted and/or ISI, on request, with a written record made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. Furthermore, we maintain a record of any such complaints for a minimum of three years.

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children in our care.

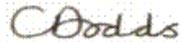
The number of formal complaints made in the previous school year.

There was one formal complaint under this policy in 2017-2018.

Policy Updated: October 2018

Review Date: October 2019

Signed (Headteacher):



Signed (Chair of Governors):

