



# Complaints Procedure

*Information for Parents: This policy is available on request.*

The Ursuline Preparatory School does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS.

We at the Ursuline Preparatory School pride ourselves on being an open friendly school and the Headteacher and her staff work hard to build positive relationships with all parents.

In order to gauge success and further improve our school and the Pre-Prep. department, we encourage parents to give suggestions and comments. It is vital to take all concerns seriously, always seeking to resolve matters quickly, professionally, fairly and to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned.

## **1. Aims**

- 1.1 To provide a consistent, common system for expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the school.
- 1.2 To deal promptly and professionally with complaints always seeking to find a way forward which is agreed and understood by all concerned.
- 1.3 The Headteacher will review the complaints folders and sign to confirm that she has checked that all matters are resolved each term.
- 1.4 Records of complaints for the school and Pre-Prep department will be kept for a minimum of 3 years.
- 1.5 To provide a system for children to make a complaint or to share their concerns via the school council who feed back to the Headteacher or to their class teacher and/or teaching assistant.

## 2. Making a complaint

### Stage 1 (Informal)

If a parent has a concern, they should in the first instance discuss the matter with the class teacher, the member of staff involved or a Deputy Headteacher. Most matters of concern will be dealt with, within **2 working days** of being contacted by the parent.

If the feedback has been verbal/informal, the formal written conclusion to the investigation is to be communicated within **5 working days** of any meeting and/or telephone discussion.

Parents are given the opportunity to raise issues at first term interviews, exit interviews and Parent Rep. meetings.

All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and making good progress, they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can act before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. Each complaint will be logged by the class teacher on the relevant form and a copy will be passed to the Headteacher.

### Stage 2 (Formal)

If a parent feels 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 concern in writing to the school to make an appointment with the Headteacher.

An appointment will be made within 5 working days once the school has received the written complaint. The Headteacher will respond to the complainant within 5 working days after the appointment. Complaints received during school holidays will be dealt with in the same time frame as during school time if at all possible. This is dependent on being able to investigate the complaint in the correct manner e.g. persons involved being available to interview. If this is not possible the complainant will be informed as soon as possible and will be advised of the date that they will receive the response as soon as is possible after that period.

The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage. However, if the complaint is not resolved at this stage or if parents are not satisfied with the outcome, then it moves to a Stage 3, which is a panel hearing.

**Stage 3** Should the parent have a complaint about the Headteacher or the Headteacher is unable to resolve a complaint, they should complete the Formal Complaint Form and address their concerns to the Trustees, who are obliged to investigate.

Once the Formal Complaint Form has been received by the Trustees in writing, it will be acknowledged within 5 working days and an interview arranged by the complaints panel within 15 working days of the original complaint.

The request for a panel hearing should include:

- A copy of all relevant documents and full contact details
- details of all the grounds of the complaint and the outcome desired
- list of the documents which the parents believe to be in the school's possession and wish the complaints panel to see
- whether they propose to be accompanied to the hearing by someone who is legally qualified and of assistance with the request as required for example because of a disability

The complaints panel will consist of 3 people, 2 of which are Trustees. One member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school. The 3 people on the complaints panel must not have been directly involved with the matters detailed in any stage of the complaint. If a complaint is made and the panel are called into action the complainant can bring a friend or colleague with them to the hearing. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. A person independent of the school would also attend namely Mr. John Coffey Q.C. should this need arise.

After hearing all the evidence, the Trustees will consider their decision and inform the parent, person cited in the

complaint and the school of their findings and recommendations in writing within 2 weeks. The Trustees do all that they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parents' satisfaction.

If the complaint is upheld then the Trustees will take the necessary action and the complainant and the person(s) cited in the complaint will also be informed.

## 2.1 In summary:

<b>Stage 1</b>	Written acknowledgement of complaint within <b>3 working days</b>
	Informal investigation and communication of outcome (meeting/telephone/letter/e-mail as appropriate) within <b>2 working days</b>
	If the feedback has been verbal/informal, the formal written conclusion to the investigation is to be communicated within <b>5 working days</b> of any meeting and/or telephone discussion.
<b>Stage 2</b>	Written acknowledgement of complaint sent by the Headteacher within <b>3 working days</b>
	The Headteacher will meet or speak to the parents, within <b>5 working days</b> of acknowledging the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
	If further investigations are needed, the Headteacher will nominate an investigating Officer who will investigate the complaint within <b>10 working days</b> of acknowledging the complaint in term time; the follow up meeting with parents will also take place within this timescale.
	Following the Stage 2 meeting, the Headteacher will make a decision regarding the outcome and any actions to be taken, to be confirmed in writing to the parents within <b>5 working days</b> of the Stage 2 meeting in term time.
<b>Stage 3</b>	Written acknowledgement of complaint sent to Governors within <b>3 working days</b> ; a Stage 3 complaints panel hearing will be scheduled to take place within <b>15 working days</b> from the acknowledgement (this may be longer out of term time).
	The documents for the hearing will be supplied to all parties not later than <b>6 working days</b> prior to the hearing.
	The Chair of the panel will write to the parents informing them of the Panel's decision and its reasons for it, within <b>5 working days</b> of the hearing.

## 4. Record Keeping

Detailed records of all complaints will be maintained at each stage including the stage at which the complaint has been resolved and details of any action taken whether or not the complaint has been upheld. The findings and recommendations are available at the school for inspection by the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.

## **5. Pre-Prep. Department**

We will ensure that complaints relating to our fulfilment of the EYFS requirements follow the procedures as outlined previously in this document; and we will notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Records of complaints relating to the Pre-Prep. department will be forwarded to OfSted and ISI.

## **6. Confidentiality**

6.1 Subject to paragraph 6.2 and 6.4 complaints or/and concerns will be treated in a confidential manner. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Headteacher and those directly involved. The Governors and Trustees will need to be informed.

6.2 In certain circumstances the school's duty is to override the duty of confidentiality. If this is the case the school may have to inform or contact a third party (for example social services – where a risk of harm to children has been identified) from outside the school and if appropriate reveal the identity of anyone involved.

6.3 We encourage people to give their name when making a complaint or raising a concern. If the maker of the complaint wishes to be anonymous the Headteacher will be informed of the nature of the complaint and will have the complete discretion as to what action, if any to be involved.

6.4 All correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints will be confidential but can be shown to Her Majesty's Inspectors or the Independent School Inspectorate under section 109 of the 2008 Act if requested access to them when they conduct an inspection.

## **7. Further Action**

7.1 If the maker of the complaint is still unhappy and unsatisfied, they may wish to consider:

- Seeking independent advice;
- Raising the matter with the Independent Schools Association (ISA) of which the Ursuline Preparatory School is a member.
- Lodging a complaint with the Registrar of Independent Schools.

- 7.2 Parents whose children are younger than 5 years of age by 31<sup>st</sup> August (children in the Pre-Prep. department) may complain directly to OfSted if they wish to do so.

Telephone: 0300 123 1231  
 Address: Piccadilly Gate  
 Store Street  
 Manchester M1 2WD  
 e-mail: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

All parents may complain directly to the ISI:

Telephone: 020 7600 0100  
 Address: CAP House  
 9 - 12 Long Lane  
 London  
 EC1A 9HA  
 Email: [info@isi.net](mailto:info@isi.net)

## 8. Childrens complaints against a peer or an adult

- 8.1 If a child wants to share their concern, worry or complaint they place their name in one of the Green Boxes. This is checked everyday.
- 8.2 The Safeguarding Lead will then listen to the child's problem, and then decide which further action should take place.
- 8.3 The children are made aware that if they ever have any complaints, worries or concerns about a member of staff they can tell their class teacher, teaching assistant, housekeepers or other members of staff and they will be listened to and taken seriously.

2021/2022	
Number of Stage 2 Complaints	0
Number of Stage 3 Complaints	0
Number of Suspensions	0
Number of Exclusions	0



Complaints Form

Name:	
Date:	

Nature of complaint:

Date referred to Head:

Action Taken:

Date referred to Trustees:

Action Taken: