



# The Priory School of Our Lady Of Walsingham



## Parental Complaints Policy

Reviewed by: Executive Committee

On: .....

Next review due: September 2024

Signature of Principal .....

## Parental Complaints Policy

*The School complies fully with the statutory requirements of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014; with due regard to the requirements, this policy should be taken as consistent with and complementary to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy also applies to the EYFS.*

A copy of this Complaints Policy is available from the School office upon request.

The timescales set out below relate to term times only. References to "working days" mean Monday to Friday, when the School is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the School's website. If a complaint is received during the School holidays, we will address the matter as soon as is reasonably practicable.

In the first instance, parents / guardians are invited to contact the School office to speak to the Form Tutors, Heads of School or Principal on an informal basis or make an appointment for a time that is more convenient.

In the majority of cases, concerns can be addressed immediately and steps are taken on the day that the problem is brought to our attention, and most certainly within three working days.

If the matter of concern cannot be resolved informally, a more formal written approach may be taken. Letters or emails will be acknowledged within two working days of receipt. The School will then arrange an internal investigation, the outcome of which will be reported to the Principal. Parents will be informed of the outcome of any investigation and our proposed resolution within 14 working days from the date of receipt of the complaint.

If a satisfactory response is still not received, the Principal will arrange a 'panel hearing' within seven working days of the notification date. The complainant may attend such a hearing and be accompanied by another person. The panel will comprise at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and at least one member of the panel shall be independent of the management and running of the School. The panel will make clear its decision and will notify the complainant and any person about whom the complaint was made of its decision orally at the hearing and subsequently in written form.

The decision, findings and any recommendations will be made available for inspection on the School premises by the proprietor and the Principal. Reasons for the decision will be given. The decision may include recommendations and will be sent to parents involved and any person about whom the complaint has been made.

A written record will be kept regarding all complaints that will indicate whether the concern was resolved at the preliminary stage, the formal written stage, or whether it was put before the panel. For the academic year 2022–2023, three formal complaints were processed in accordance with School policy.

All aspects, that is, records, notes, letters and discussions, of the complaint will remain confidential, except to the extent required by paragraph 7(k) of the Schedule to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, that is where access is requested by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required in the course of a School's inspection or under other legal authority.

All evidence gathered in the course of the investigation will be treated strictly in accordance with the School's legal duty under the Data Protection Act 1998 and with its own Data Protection Policy.

If at any point legal proceedings or correspondence are commenced by a parent against the School or a staff member, the parent's children may be removed from the School during the period of proceedings or correspondence to prevent irreconcilable conflicts of interest, particularly in relation to evidence gathering, so as not to compromise the integrity of any investigation. This is at the discretion of the Principal. At the end or cessation of legal proceedings and/or legal correspondence, parents may apply for readmission, subject to the admissions policy.

A written record of all complaints and action taken by the School, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing, will be kept on file at the School.

## EYFS Complaints

Written complaints about EYFS matters will be investigated and the outcome(s) indicated to the complainant(s) within 28 days. The results will also be notified to ISI.

If any complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the School should be notified in the first instance, and the matter will be re-investigated. Complainants' rights to contact ISI direct are safeguarded.

Contact details are:

Phone: 0207 6000 100

Email: [complaints@isi.net](mailto:complaints@isi.net)

Parents may also notify Ofsted if they have any complaints about EYFS matters.

Contact details are:

Phone: 0300 123 1231

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Any record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted on request.

Authorised by the Principal, Mr David EJJ Lloyd

September 2023



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## Agreement

This Agreement is consistent with the School's policies that cover the welfare of both pupils and staff

- The School's primary focus at all times is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for its pupils in order that they may receive the best education that the School is able to provide.
- Allegations made by pupils and /or parents / guardians against members of teaching or non-teaching staff are thoroughly investigated by means of interviews with the pupil(s) making the allegation, with any corroborating witnesses, and the member of staff so accused. All such investigations and interviews are conducted in the strictest confidence, and are taken seriously in order to test their validity or veracity. The rights of both parties are stressed at all times, as is the need for sensitivity and disinterest. The School will always fully support the victim(s) in such circumstances.
- All investigations into such matters are conducted according to the standard School procedures found in our policies.
- If on investigation allegations are found to be false and / or malicious, the following may result:
  1. Immediate expulsion from the School
  2. The matter being reported to the police
  3. Legal proceedings being commenced against the offender, for defamation of character and damage to professional reputation
- The School will not tolerate false and / or malicious allegations against members of its teaching and non-teaching staff, whether by pupils or adults: action in such circumstances will always be taken. It will take every necessary action to protect the personal and professional integrity of its employees.

Authorised by the Principal, Mr David EJJ Lloyd

September 2023