

WALTHAMSTOW MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

At WMS, we provide the highest standards of care and education to all children however, from time to time parents/legal guardians may have concerns or complaints relating to the care of their child, the school curriculum, staff, or any other area of the school. Where these do arise, we aim to investigate the concern fully, take actions that promote the best interest of children at our school and continually monitor all complaints and concerns raised.

We have a Complaints procedure, which is followed by all staff, students and volunteers. The aim of the procedure is to allow parents/carers to raise their concern as soon as possible. Parents can also ask to see appropriate information from the complaints records on request. Any concerns should initially be discussed with the child's class teacher or a member of staff based in the child's class. Wherever possible this should be done on the day the concern arose so that it can be dealt with promptly.

Any child protection complaint and/or concern should be forwarded to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the deputy DSL immediately.

Students and volunteers must not discuss concerns with parents, they must ask a senior member of staff to discuss issues with parents.

Copies of all meetings, investigations and recommendations related to any complaints are kept in the school's complaint's file.

Complaints Procedure

Under normal circumstances, the school principal will be responsible for the overall managing of complaints. If a complaint is to be made against the principal, the parent can contact the Head of School.

Stage One – (Informal) Sharing your Concern

As outlined in the Parent Partnership policy, our school is committed to open and regular dialogue with parents/carers and welcomes all comments on its services, regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

If you are concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at the school you should, in the first instance discuss the matter with your child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that every pupil is happy at school, and are making good progress; we always want to know if there is a problem, so that we can take action before the problem seriously affects a pupil's welfare and/or progress.

If a parent/carer has a complaint about some aspect of the school's activity, or about the conduct of an individual member of staff, it will often be possible to resolve the problem by simply speaking to the relevant member of staff, if deemed appropriate. If not, the Head of School should be approached and they will try to resolve the problem. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then Stage Two of the procedure will formally come into operation.

Stage Two – (Formal)

If informal discussions of a complaint or concern have not produced a satisfactory resolution to the situation, parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Head of School detailing relevant names, dates, evidence and any other relevant important information (a form is attached that you may use for your convenience).

The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible – within three school working days at least – and fully investigate the matter within 10 school working days of receipt. If there is any delay, the school will advise the parent/carers of this and offer an explanation. The Head of School will be responsible for sending the parent a full and formal response to the complaint within 7 days of any investigation into a complaint.

The Head of School will arrange a time to meet the parent/carer concerned and any other relevant individuals, such as members of staff, to discuss the

complaint and the school's response to it. The Head of School will decide if it is best for all parties to meet together or if individual meetings are more appropriate.

Records will be kept of all school meetings.

Stage 3 – (Formal)

If the complaint is still unresolved at Stages 1 and 2, you may ask for the complaint to be heard by our complaints panel.

Provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the Head of School. It will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The Head of School will ensure that one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school and allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at the panel hearing if they wish. The school aims to arrange the hearing within 20 school days from the date of informing the school that a Stage 3 panel is required. The school will provide the complainant with at least 10 day's notice of the panel hearing date.

If the Head of School has good reason to believe that the situation has child protection implications, they should inform the designated Child Protection Officer and ensure that the local social services department is contacted, according to the procedure set out in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. If any party involved in the complaint has good reason to believe that a criminal offence has been committed, then they will contact the police.

The formal response to the complaint from the school will be sent to the parent/carer concerned within 7 working days of the panel meeting and copied to all relevant members of staff if appropriate. The response will include recommendations for dealing with the complaint and for any amendments to the school's policies or procedures emerging from the investigation.

Stage Four

If at the conclusion of this process parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the response they have received, the original complaint along with the organisation's response will be passed to the Principal, who will adjudicate the case.

The Principal will communicate a detailed response, including any actions to be taken, to the parents/carers concerned within 7 working days. They may also

wish to meet with all persons involved to help gain a background before making a decision.

Stage Five – Appeal

At the end of this stage Four, if parents are still dissatisfied they may wish to raise their concern with Ofsted via the contact details below:

Ofsted
Ofsted National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone 0300 123 1231
Website: <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Parents Carers can raise their concern with Ofsted without resorting to any of the above stages of our complaint procedure, or at any stage of the procedure.

Ofsted can request to see a list of complaints made within a certain time frame including the actions and outcomes of such complaints. The school will keep records of all complaints for a minimum of 3 year period and will make these available to Ofsted when requested.

(A signed policy is available upon request)

This policy was adopted on dated: **01.09.2017**

Signed (Principal):

Signed (Senior member of school staff):

Signed (Parent Representative):

Date signed: 1/5/18

Date to be Reviewed: **01.05.19**

SUMMARY OF TIMESCALES

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSE
1	Informal: Sharing your concern A discussion with a relevant member of staff, e.g. teacher or Head of School if appropriate.	As soon as possible, within 3 school days.
2	Formal: Making a complaint to the Head of School	Acknowledged within 3 school days of receipt and responded to within 10 days.
3	Formal: Making a complaint to the complaints panel	Hearing arranged within 20 school days, providing the complainant with 10 days' notice of the panel meeting.
4.	Formal: If still dissatisfied the complaint is passed to the Principal	Acknowledged within 7 school days and communication to parent within 20 working days.
5.	Appeal: Raise concern with Ofsted	Details on complaint's policy.

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Please indicate or provide paperwork/previous correspondence.

Signature:

Date:

Office:

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Referred to:

Date: