

# Keswick House Nursery School

## Policy on Complaints

(Autumn Term 2023)

(Review date: Autumn Term 2024)

Reviewed by Gabriella Emery

A strong partnership with parents and carers is of utmost importance at Keswick House Nursery School. In order for the Nursery to run well and effectively, parents and staff must work together with the children's best interests always in mind. In the event of a complaint arising the School will take immediate measures to deal with the complaint quickly and appropriately.

This policies made available via the school website, and to all parents (current and prospective) are kept in the school office. It is provided to all staff as part of their induction.

### Informal Complaint Procedures:

Before making a formal complaint, please check the details of the cause of your concern with your child's key teacher. This can often resolve the problem. The class teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date that they were received and enter it on the child's parent log.

If you do not feel that the problem has been resolved, you can ask the Nursery Manager for advice.

If you still do not feel that the problem has been resolved, you may wish to take your concern to the Head of Nursery Schools. The main priority is to resolve the matter quickly and calmly. It is likely that a problem will become more difficult to solve as more people become involved. Try to involve just the people who you feel may help solve the problem.

If the concern has not been resolved follow the formal complaint procedures outlined below.

At this level it is important that everyone involved is clear about the procedures and the nature of complaint, so you should make important points in writing.

### Formal Complaint Procedures:

#### **Stage 1**

- Write to the Head of Nursery Schools saying that you are making a formal complaint. Say what the complaint is, with all relevant details, your name and how you can be contacted. If your complaint is about the Head of Nursery Schools, go straight to Stage 2.
- The Head of Nursery Schools should acknowledge your letter within 5 school days\*. She will look into your complaint and decide the best way of solving the problem. It may be necessary for the Head to meet with the parents or to carry out further

investigations Hopefully you will be able to accept the Head of Nursery Schools' guidance.

If this does not resolve your complaint, or if the Head of Nursery Schools has not offered a way forward within 14 days of your writing to the school, you can go to Stage 2 of this procedure.

## **Stage 2**

- If Stage 1 of the complaints procedure did not solve the problem, or if your complaint is about the Head Teacher, you can put the problem before the Principal. The Principal should acknowledge your letter with 5 school days\*. The principal will look into your complaint and decide the best way of solving the problem. Hopefully you will be able to accept the Principal's guidance.
- Written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Principal is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision (together with reasons) in writing as soon as is practicable but normally within 20 working days of receipt of the written complaint. Only in exceptional circumstances or with complex cases will this take longer and parents will be informed of the likely timeframe for a response.
- If parents are not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this procedure within 30 working days of the Principal's decision.

## **Stage 3**

- If Stage 2 of the complaints procedure did not solve the problem, or if the Principal did not respond, or if your complaint is about the Principal and a parent wishes to invoke stage 3, parents should make this request within 30 working days for the outcome of Stage 2 to The Secretary of The Roche School Advisory Board who has been appointed to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- Parents should give full details of the complaint and enclose all relevant supporting documents.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.
- The Panel will consist of at least three people appointed by the Chairman of the Advisory Board. People appointed will not be directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, of which one will be independent of the management and running of the school. The Secretary of the Advisory Board, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as possible and normally within seven working days. (14 working days during the school holiday or as soon as practically possible).

- You can attend the hearing, and be accompanied if you wish by one other person and this person can be a relative, teacher or friend.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any other related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.
- The Secretary to the Advisory Board will take a written record of the meeting and this will form the minutes of the meeting which shall be shared the parent(s) within five days of the panel hearing.

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#### **Stage 4**

- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint made in accordance with Stage 3, the final step is to contact Ofsted. Their contact details are on display around the school and are outlined below as follows:

**Ofsted**  
**Piccadilly Gate**  
**Store Street**  
**Manchester**  
**M1 2WD**  
**Tel. 0300 123 1231**  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

\*A letter sent close to the start of a school holiday may not be dealt with until the school re-opens.

#### **General Issues:**

#### **Record Keeping**

- The school keeps a written record of all complaints or appeals for 3 years, and of whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceeded to a Panel Hearing. The School keeps written records of action taken as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- Parents can be assured that complaints are to be kept confidential and subject to the Data Protection Act 1988 except where the Secretary of State or body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the Education and skills Act 2008 requests access to them. The record of complaints must be made available to OFSTED on request.

## **Mediation**

At any stage of the process it may be helpful to consider mediation, or a facilitated discussion by an experienced mediator, as a way to address any particularly difficult or sensitive issues as constructively as possible.

## **Withdrawal of complaints**

You may withdraw your complaint at any time. If possible, you should write to the person who was last dealing with the matter. You will then be sent a written acknowledgement of the withdrawal of the complaint.

## **Anonymous complaints**

Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with by the formal procedure detailed in this booklet.

## **Confidentiality**

All complaints are dealt with in confidence, with information only being given to those people who need to know.

## **Lobbying**

No one should lobby or put pressure on a person responsible for investigating a complaint.

## **Special Circumstances**

At times it may be necessary to change the way a complaint is dealt with. This could be because of the nature of the original complaint or because additional information comes to light.

Other ways dealing with a complaint include:

- Staff disciplinary action
- Criminal investigation
- Child protection investigation

If this is the case, the Head of Nursery Schools must let you know in writing with the minimum of delay. You should be told what the procedure will be and what the outcomes might be.

## **Keswick House Nursery School's Senior Leadership team is comprised of:**

**Dr. James Roche**      Principal

**Gabriella Emery**      Head of Nursery Schools

**Lisa Christou**      Nursery Manager

## **A summary of the stages in this school's complaints procedure**


The diagrams on the following two pages provide summaries of both the informal and formal procedures detailed in this Policy. This is only a summary and you are advised to ensure that you have read the relevant section of the guidance in detail before starting out on any of the stages. Please remember that it is normal and expected that each stage will be followed in sequence. It is also expected that there will be good reason to move on to the next stage in the procedures.



## INFORMAL PROCEDURES

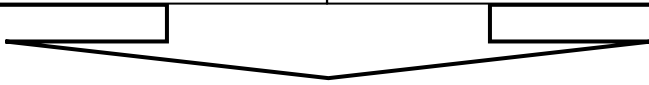
### FIRST STEP:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Discuss the problem with the key teacher.	The member of staff concerned will help to ensure you have all the relevant details.



### SECOND STEP:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Discuss the problem with the Nursery Manager	The member of staff concerned will help to ensure you have all the relevant details.



### THIRD STEP:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Discuss the problem with the Head of Nursery Schools.	The Head of Nursery Schools will help to ensure you have all the relevant details.

### **Please note:**

If your complaint is about the Head of Nursery Schools, please discuss the problem with the Principal.

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## FORMAL PROCEDURES

### STAGE ONE:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Write to the Head of Nursery Schools stating that you are making a formal complaint. State your complaint; give all relevant details, your name and how you may be contacted.	You should receive an acknowledgement within 5 school days and the Head of Nursery Schools' findings within 15 school days.

**If you are not satisfied with the findings of the Head of Nursery Schools or if your complaint is about the Head of Nursery Schools please go straight to Stage Two.**

### STAGE TWO:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Write to the Principal stating that you are making a formal complaint. State your complaint; give all relevant details, your name and how you may be contacted.	The member of staff concerned will help to ensure you have all the relevant details.

**If you are not satisfied with the findings of the Principal or if your complaint is about the Principal please go straight to Stage Three**

### STAGE THREE:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Request a hearing before a panel.	You should receive a copy of the panel's findings and recommendations within 5 school days of the date of the hearing.

**If you are not satisfied with the findings of the panel**

### STAGE FOUR:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:	WHAT WILL HAPPEN:
Contact Ofsted. State your complaint; give all relevant details, including the steps you have already taken to resolve the issue. You will also need to include your name and contact details.	The member of staff concerned will help to ensure you have all the relevant details.