



DANESHILL SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

**This policy applies to all parts of Daneshill School including the Early Years
Foundation Stage.**

Updated: September 2016
Review: September 2017

INTRODUCTION

Daneshill School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school with care and in accordance with this procedure.

The school has established this procedure with the intention of meeting the concerns of parents before they develop into complaints and of resolving complaints that do arise as effectively as possible.

As a school we would prefer parents to raise any concerns they may have about the education and development of their child, or about any aspect of the running of the school or any part of it, at the earliest opportunity. Addressing a concern before it becomes a complaint is in the best interests of pupils, parents and the school, but it can only happen if the school is aware of the concern.

Daneshill School makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and prospective pupils in the school office during the school day, and Daneshill School will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is available and the form in which it is available.

In accordance with paragraph 25(3)(g) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations January 2014, Daneshill School will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the ISI for the purposes of section 162A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (as subsequently amended), details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done or acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you raise in good faith.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within 7 days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods (or at least within 7 days of the school returning from holiday).

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 28 days, if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

Complaints made directly to a member of the SMT will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher unless the member of the SMT deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The form teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 7 days, or in the event that the form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

If the complaint is against the Head, parents should still make their complaint directly to the Proprietor.

STAGE 2 – FORMAL RESOLUTION

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head will speak to the parents concerned, within 7 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.

The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head is satisfied that, so 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 in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

STAGE 3 – PANEL HEARING

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) then the matter will be referred to Mr Ian Power who has been appointed by the Proprietor to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Proprietor. Mr Power, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within 14 days of receiving the complaint.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.

The parents can attend and may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations.

The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 7 days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about as well as the Proprietor and Head.

A copy of the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and head.

RECORDING COMPLAINTS

Following resolution of a formal complaint, the school will keep a written record of all formal complaints and whether they were resolved at the formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing. The school will also keep a record of the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised;
- Name of parent;
- Name of pupil;
- Description of the issue;
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate);
- Witness statements (if appropriate);
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage;
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations).

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual formal complaints will be kept confidential 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.

COMPLAINTS TO OFSTED REGARDING EYFS SERVICE PROVIDERS

WRITTEN COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EYFS: Daneshill School will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaint will be kept for at least three years.

COMPLAINTS TO OFSTED REGARDING EYFS ISSUES: Parents may also complain directly to Ofsted and / or ISI if they believe the school is not meeting EYFS requirements. Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 4234 or by e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by e-mail: concerns@isi.net