

COOPERSALE HALL SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS (EYFS AND MAIN SCHOOL)

Coopersale Hall School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns that they may raise.

The way we work is reviewed regularly. From time to time, however, a parent or child may feel they have a complaint against some aspect of our School, or an individual member of staff. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially (although disclosure may perhaps be required in the course of the School's inspection or where legal obligation prevails).

If you wish to make a formal complaint you should follow our Complaints Procedure:

Stage One: Informal Resolution

You should normally contact your child's Class Teacher in the first instance but you can also talk directly to other members of staff, write a letter, or telephone. The teacher will make a written record of the complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved straightaway by these means, you may wish to contact a more senior member of staff; for example the Deputy Head or the Headmistress.

Should the outcome not be resolved satisfactorily within 5 working days, parents may wish to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage Two: Formal Resolution

Please write to the Headmistress letting him know the nature of the complaint. Include full details and names and dates where appropriate.

The Headmistress will contact you within 5 working school days of receipt of your written complaint to respond to your concerns and explain how we intend to proceed. The matter will be fully investigated, usually within 10 working days. If there is any delay, we will keep you up to date and advise you of the reasons. Complainants will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

The Headmistress will speak to all the people involved in the cause of the complaint in order to establish the facts. Initially, those involved will be interviewed separately. If there are discrepancies in the evidence given, the Headmistress may decide to call several people together in order to investigate further.

If the complaint involves a member of staff, the Headmistress may decide to invite the parent to talk to the member of staff in the presence of the Headmistress in order to establish a course of action to resolve the problem. The Headmistress will keep written records of all meetings and interviews.

A letter or report will be sent to you as soon as possible, and within 28 days of receipt of the complaint, advising the conclusion of the investigation and any action proposed or taken. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can ask the Headmistress to refer the matter to the next stage or he may feel it appropriate to take the complaint to the next stage of the official procedure.

Stage Three: Panel Hearing

The Headmistress will refer the complaint and response to the Management Committee of the Oak-Tree Group of Schools. Alternatively, if the complaint concerns the Headmistress you may wish to write directly to the Management Committee. The Management Committee will convene a panel of at least three people, not directly involved in the matters that are subject to complaint, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the School.

The panel will call for a full report from the Headmistress and, if necessary, obtain further particulars about the matter. The panel will examine the complaint fully before responding. This may result in a positive solution but, if it does not, the panel will invite you to a meeting which should take place normally within 10 working days. The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

After due consideration of all the relevant facts, the panel will reach a decision and make recommendations which shall be completed within 10 working days of the hearing. The panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the panel will be final. The panel's findings will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmistress and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the complaint. The outcomes of such hearings will be kept strictly confidential between these parties.

Records of complaints will be kept for at least three years.

Parents have the right to make a complaint to Ofsted and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) if they wish to do so.

The address for the Independent Schools Inspectorate is CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA, telephone 020 7600 0100.

The address for Ofsted is Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester M2 7LA, telephone 08456 404045.

**THIS POLICY WAS REVIEWED AND UPDATED IN JUNE 2011
KAYE LOVEJOY**