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	Name	Date
Name of Policy	Parental Grievance and Complaints Policy & Procedure	
Prepared by	Dallington School	Spring 2020
Checked and Reviewed by		
Ratified by Board of Governors		
Next School Review		Spring 2022

Parental Grievance and Complaints Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Parents who are unhappy about any aspect of the School should contact us without delay.
- 1.2 Teaching staff will always be available to meet concerned parents by appointment. It is our experience that most concerns can be dealt with satisfactorily by means of such direct, but informal, communication.
- 1.3 In the event of a parent wishing to make a formal complaint, this should be in writing and be addressed to the individual teacher with a copy sent simultaneously to the Headteacher.
- 1.4 The School will work with you to resolve your grievance through meetings and if required, longer term observation and discussion.
- 1.5 Any parent who is still not satisfied after taking this course of action should contact the Headteacher in writing with a view to further discussion or arbitration with the hope of an amicable and satisfactory resolution to the issue.

2. Procedures

The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and

which –

- provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is –
- provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
- available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;
- provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints, a

- whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and
- provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Dallington School has always been thought of, by parents and staff alike, as a school which has its basis in a strong sense of community with strong egalitarian principles. In practice this means that we are both used to working in a friendly environment and, as members of staff, we actively encourage it. For us community does not mean an absence of complaints, but it should imply that the majority of issues can be resolved with a positive and friendly outlook from all parties concerned. Moreover, this attitude is indeed what we see in practice and it is therefore hard to characterize the resolution of parents' concerns as anything other than the daily interaction and dialogue which forms an important part of parent/teacher exchanges.

Nevertheless, it is important that all concerned with Dallington understand the policy and procedure we follow in the event that an issue is not resolved through regular means of communication. This is especially relevant if the issue is one which does not concern the teaching staff directly, for example an issue relating to fees or extra-mural activities.

3. Stage 1 – Informal Procedure

3.1 Please discuss any concerns you might have with your class teacher. In most instances it is both our hope and our previous experience that this is the best way of resolving any concerns. All teachers are likely to want to arrange an appropriate time to meet for discussion as it is often inappropriate to hold an ad hoc meeting during teaching time.

What will happen

3.2 It is hoped that the matter raised during the meeting can be resolved through discussion. As is sometimes the case, the issue is something which is best monitored over time and a follow-up meeting can therefore be arranged.

4 Stage 2 – Formal Procedure

Written Notification of Grievance:

4.1 If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint has been dealt with under the informal procedure above, you may wish to formalise your complaint by putting it in letter form. It is essential that you cc a copy of this letter to the Headteacher.

What will happen?

4.2 The teacher concerned will reply to your letter within 28 days. If the letter is received during school holiday time or close to the end of term, then other arrangements will be made and you will be informed directly. Your teacher may well consult the Headteacher for advice in dealing with your complaint and will organise a meeting for the resolution of this matter.

4.3 Unless you have requested it or it is deemed necessary, this process does not automatically lead to a meeting with the Headteacher. However, as stated above, Dallington prides itself on its community spirit and it is part of our normal behaviour to work together to resolve any matters of disagreement.

4.4 Again, if the issue raised is not resolvable through a single meeting or requires longer term observation and discussion, further meetings will be arranged.

5. Stage 3 – Formal Procedure, direct written contact with the

Headteacher

5.1 If for whatever reason you do not feel that your complaint has been dealt with successfully, the appropriate course of action is to write a formal letter outlining your concerns directly to the Headteacher. Where the matter is of a sensitive nature, the grievance may be referred, by the Headteacher, to the Board of Governors.

What will happen?

5.2 You will receive a reply from the Headteacher within 28 days. It is generally expected that a meeting will be arranged between you and the Headteacher in order to discuss the matter and decide on a plan of action to resolve the matter as effectively as possible. Follow-up meetings will be arranged as appropriate.

6 Stage 4 – Arbitration Procedure

6.1 If you still feel that the matter has not been dealt with satisfactorily, then on written request, the Headteacher will organise a more formal meeting.

What will happen?

Notification of Grievance Hearing:

6.2 If you make such a request in writing, you will receive a reply within 28 days.

6.3 Once the written grievance has been received, you will be invited to attend a hearing to discuss the grievance.

The Grievance Hearing:

In accordance with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, the meeting will take the following form:

6.4 A panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint will meet for the purpose of resolving the complaint through constructive discussion.

6.5 The deputy Headteacher, or another experienced member of staff if they are unavailable or involved in the grievance, will chair the meeting and organise the taking of minutes. 6.6 One panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school.

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6.7 You, the parent, may attend and be accompanied at the hearing if you wish.

6.8 Minutes from the meeting will be sent to all attendees and a period of 7 working days is allowed for any objections to the content of the minutes to be raised. It is hoped that this process will satisfy all concerned and lead to a satisfactory outcome.

6.9 Further meetings may be requested or required according to the nature of the complaint. At the end of each meeting it should be decided by mutual agreement as to which format the subsequent meeting should follow.

6.10 All minutes from such meetings are deemed confidential for all parties.

7 Stage 5 – Appeal

7.1 If you wish to appeal a grievance outcome, you may appeal, in writing, to the Board of Governors.

Our current Chair is: Vaughan Grylls

46 Wilmington Square, WC1X 0ET

Tel: 020 7837 1073

What will happen?

7.2 You will be invited to attend an appeal hearing to present your case to the Board of Governors.

7.3 Wherever possible, it is hoped that a final response to the grievance will be forwarded to you within ten working days of the appeal hearing. If it is not possible to respond, within this period, you will be given an explanation for the delay and told when a response can be expected.

8 Other forms of complaint

8.1 Complaints relating to fees

All complaints relating to fees or financial matters should be addressed in the form of a letter direct to the Bursar.

What will happen?

8.2 You will receive a reply within 28 working days. All efforts will be made to resolve the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible.

8.3 Complaints relating to exclusions

Dallington School does not use exclusions without considering all alternatives. As a consequence, such action would never be taken without direct consultation with the parents concerned. The Headteacher would always be involved in this consultation and the process by which it would be decided that exclusion is the best course of action.

8.4 If however, there is a complaint that arises from such a situation, it is subject to the procedure described in 'Stage 4' above.

8.5 Complaints relating to global school issues

Dallington School always strives to make sure that parents understand the running of the school and the kinds of global changes we are sometimes required or forced to make during the school year. For example, this could

be a change in our timetable. If there is a complaint arising from such a global issue, please follow the procedures outlined above.

8.6 If the issue has been raised by information distributed by the school itself, please refer to the date and subject of that specific correspondence in any informal or formal communication.

9 The Role of Ofsted in the complaints procedure

9.1 It is Dallington School's duty as a registered provider to respond to written complaints within 28 days.

9.2 As previously stated, we are a school which has its basis in a strong sense of community with strong egalitarian principles and as such would hope to resolve complaints in an informal way within this community. However, we acknowledge that on occasion a complainant may wish to seek the involvement and support of Ofsted.

9.3 Ofsted will investigate issues such as a complaint relating to the registration of Dallington School as a registered provider.

9.4 Some complaints, or aspects of complaints are about matters that Ofsted does not investigate. They do not act upon complaints about providers which relate to private matters between the provider and the complainant, such as:

- placement or contractual disputes
- employment matter

9.5 For further information, please contact:

Complaints, 3d Floor,

Royal Exchange, St Ann's

Square, Manchester M2 7LA

Ofsted Early Years Helpline: 08456 40 40 40

If for any reason this procedure is unclear, please contact us in the school office and we will endeavour to clarify any points you might have.

11 Monitoring of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body or when any changes are made to relevant legislation or standards.