



Complaints Policy

Newton International School D Ring

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Policy Title				Complaints				
Policy Number								
Policy Owner				Deputy Head Pastoral				
Policy Agreed on				August 2016				
Policy reviewed on				March 2022				
Policy to be reviewed on				March 2023				
Statutory Policy	Yes	No	Website	Yes	No	Google Classroom	Yes	No

Complaints Policy

General Principles

The following procedures should not be used for complaints that fall under existing procedures and are therefore covered by other documentation:

- Curriculum
- Admissions
- Exclusions
- Special Educational Needs
- Staff grievances

Parents can raise concerns by contacting their class teacher, a member of SMT or the Principal. If the concern is not resolved informally parents may lodge a formal complaint. The procedure for lodging a formal complaint is contained within this policy. This policy is available for all parents via the Parent Handbook.

Procedures should be as speedy as possible – consistent and fair to all concerned

Each stage of the procedure will have known time limits. Where it is not possible to meet these, the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

Confidentiality

All concerns and complaints will be treated with confidentiality. It will be made clear to parents that making a complaint will not result in their child being penalised. Complainants will, however, be made aware that some information will have to be shared with those involved in order that the complaint can be investigated. Anonymous complaints will normally be disregarded unless they relate to a serious issue. The Principal and CEO will decide whether the gravity of an anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

Redress

If the outcome of the complaints procedure shows the school is at fault, redress will be in the form of an acknowledgement that the complaint is valid. It may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology
- An explanation
- A promise that the event complained of will not recur
- An undertaking to review school policies or practices in the light of the complaint

Staff awareness

All staff will be made aware of the procedures, as potentially many will be involved with handling complaints, especially at the informal level. Staff have clear information about which staff have responsibilities so that parents do not get continually passed from one to another.

Support for a member of staff complained against

Staff who may be questioned as part of the investigation of a complaint will be treated fairly and they will always have the opportunity to put their case. A friend or representative may accompany them at any stage.

The complaints procedure is distinct from formal disciplinary proceedings for staff and this will need to be made clear to all concerned. However there may be occasions when a complaint leads to a disciplinary procedure which puts the complaints process on hold. If so, the complainant should be informed of this, without going into details, and updated regularly on likely further delay. After the disciplinary process is completed it will be necessary to decide what further response to the complainant is required.

Record keeping

Complaints are recorded and monitored regularly by staff by using a standard proforma (see appendix 1). Records of these are kept in the child's class file. The Principal keeps a central file for complaints which are not resolved immediately and therefore investigated by her. Recording begins at the point when an initial concern or complaint cannot be resolved immediately but needs some investigation and/or consultation with others in school and a subsequent report back to the parent.

School Complaints Procedure

A Staged Approach

Newton International School D Ring has adopted a staged approach to the complaints procedure as follows:

Stage 1: The first contact

- Parents are always welcome to discuss any concerns with the appropriate member of staff, who will clarify with the parent the nature of the concern and reassure them that the school wants to hear about it. The member of staff may explain to the parent how the situation happened. It can be helpful at this point to identify what sort of outcome the parent is looking for.
- If the member of staff first contacted cannot immediately deal with the matter, they must make a clear note of the date, name and contact telephone number (see appendix 1).
- All members of staff will know how to refer, if necessary, to the person with responsibility for the particular issue raised by the parent. They will check later to make sure the referral has been dealt with.
- If the matter is brought to the attention of the Principal she may decide to deal with concerns directly at this stage if the complaint is more serious; if the complaint is against the Principal the parent will be advised to contact the CEO.
- The member of staff dealing with the concern will make sure the parent is clear what action (if any) or monitoring of the situation has been agreed, putting it in writing if appropriate.

- Where no satisfactory solution has been found within ten days, parents will be advised that if they wish their concern to be considered further, they should email the Principal.

Stage 2: Referral to the Principal for investigation

- The Principal (or designated person) will acknowledge the complaint in writing within three working days of receiving the written complaint. The acknowledgement will give a brief explanation of the school's complaints procedure and a target date for providing a response to the complaint. This should normally be within ten working days. If this proves impossible, a letter will be sent explaining the reason for the delay and giving a revised target date.
- The Principal will provide an opportunity for the complainant to meet them to supplement any information provided previously.
- If necessary, the Principal will interview witnesses and take statements from those involved or delegate another member of SMT to do that on their behalf. If the complaint centres on a student, the student should also be interviewed. If a member of staff is complained against, they must have the opportunity to present their case (see General Principles).
- The Principal will keep written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all the relevant facts have been established as far as possible, the Principal will then produce a written response to the complainant, including a full explanation of the decision and the reasons for it. Where appropriate, this will include what action the school will take to resolve the complaint. The complainant may also be advised that should they wish to take the complaint further, they should inform the CEO within 14 days of receiving the letter.
- If the complaint is against the Principal, or if the Principal has been closely involved at Stage 1, the CEO will carry out all the Stage 2 procedures.

Stage 3: Referral to the CEO for Panel Hearing

Stage 3 is an appeal to a Complaints Panel

In the event of an appeal the complainant should send written notice to the CEO, outlining the nature of the complaint and specify the nature of the expected outcome. In the case of appeal being in relation to a suspension or exclusion it will be at the CEO discretion to suspend or exclude pending the outcome of appeal.

- The CEO will appoint a panel of 3 external members one of which is independent of the school.
- Complainant will be informed of hearing date through writing by appointed chair of panel no later than 14 days of receipt of appeal notification.
- Complainant will be invited to attend panel and be accompanied by a support person if they so wish.

- During period between appeal being submitted and the panel hearing, the panel may collect information and conduct interviews. A summary of these will be provided to complainant.
- Three days prior to the hearing the complainant must provide the panel with copies of all information they will rely on during the hearing.
- If possible the panel will resolve the complaint immediately. Where further investigation is required the panel will communicate with complainant next steps.
- Within 10 day of the hearing the Panel Chair will submit a summary of findings and recommendations to the complainant, Principal and CEO.
- The panel findings are final.

Appendix 1: Complaint Proforma

Parental Issues

Child's Name:

Class:

Parents Name:

Contact Tel.No.:

Nature of Issue: 1. Child 2. Class 3. School 4. Admin 5. Other

Brief details of issue:

Has the Class Teacher been contacted? Yes / No If yes, on what date?

If no – please arrange a meeting with the Class Teacher: Date of Meeting:

Outcome of Meeting:

Has the Team Leader been contacted? Yes / No If yes, on what date?

If no – please arrange a meeting with the Team Leader: Date of Meeting:

Outcome of Meeting:

Has the Key Stage Coordinator/Deputy Head of Primary been contacted? Yes / No If yes, on what date?

If no – please arrange a meeting with the Deputy Principal or Head of Primary as appropriate.

Date of Meeting:

Outcome of Meeting:

When all of the above have been completed and the situation is still ongoing, please arrange a meeting with the Principal: Date of meeting:

Final Resolution:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 3: Flowchart of initial complaints procedure



If you have an issue or complaint ...

Have you filled in a form with the receptionist and made an appointment to see the class teacher?

YES
Was the issue resolved?

YES

NO
Have you made an appointment to see the team leader for your child's year group?

YES
Was the issue resolved?

YES

NO
Ask the receptionist to make an appointment for you with a member of the Senior Management Team. Leave your tel.no./email so you can be contacted. Outline what your complaint or issue is about.

NO
Ask the receptionist to make an appointment for you. Leave your tel.no./email so you can be contacted. Outline what your complaint or issue is about.

NO
Ask the receptionist to make an appointment for you. Leave your tel.no./email so you can be contacted. Outline what your complaint or issue is about.

Appendix 4: Formal Complaints Form



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Formal Complaints Form

Please complete and return to the Principal who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken	
Your Name	
Pupil's Name and Class	
Your relationship to the pupil	
Daytime tel. no.	
Please give details of your complaint here (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
What actions, if any, have you taken to try and resolve your complaint (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem?	

Are you attaching any paperwork?	
Signature	
Date	
For Office Use only	
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By Whom:	
Complaint referred to:	
Date:	

Appendix 6: Record Keeping Form



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Parent/Teacher Interview Form

Teacher:

Parent of:

Reason(s) for Interview:

Date:

Interview Notes:

Further Action Points: