



**Meadow Hall Policy**  
**On**  
**Complaints**

**June 2017**

## **1. Title: Complaints Policy**

## **2. Introduction**

We strive to provide good education for all our children. The Head Teacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. However, if parents or carers are unhappy with the education that their child(ren) is/are receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to speak up. They can talk to the child(ren)'s class teacher immediately. We always seek to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible, in the best interests of the child. In the vast majority of such cases, issues can be resolved to the satisfaction of parents and carers without recourse to formal procedures. If the school itself, including the governing body, cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the State or Federal authorities.

## **3. Purpose**

To ensure processes through which parents and care-givers can exercise their right to complain about aspects of the school's policy or practice, if they have concerns which have not been resolved through the normal channels of communication.

## **4. Aims and Objectives**

The aims of this policy are to:

- assure all parents that we will consider all complaints seriously;
- set out how we will manage the complaints process;
- make clear the roles and responsibilities of staff in responding to any complaints;
- provide information to parents and carers if they wish to make a complaint;
- give parents, teachers and students the opportunity to air their complaints.

## **5. Scope**

The purpose of the Complaints Policy is to address concerns raised mainly by parents/care-givers. The policy applies to all matters relating to the actions of staff and the application of school procedures, where they affect individual student. Where it becomes evident at an early stage that the nature of the complaint should be dealt with according to other established policies, this complaints policy would be set aside in favour of the alternative policy such as Child Protection, Special Education Needs, Admissions or Discipline. The school will not deal with anonymous complaints and therefore this policy does not provide for a resolution of anonymous complaints except for the referral of child protection concerns within the scope of policy.

## 6. Key Measures

### 6.1 The Complaints Process

- All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress
- If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child(ren)'s class teacher. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively and informally within 48 hours.
- Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.
- Where complaints are not satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the concerned Head Teacher then must get the Executive Director Academic Affairs (EDAA) or the Director of Studies (DoS) involved depending on section of the school concerned. The EDAA will attend to such complaints relating or pertaining to the college while the DoS will attend to complaints from Infant/Junior sections of the school.
- If an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter, a formal complaint to the Chief Executive Officer of Meadow Hall Group is logged. This must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The Chief Executive Officer of Meadow Hall Group tries all within her power to resolve the matter.
- If this fails, a letter of complaint can be sent to the School's Complaints Panel consisting of at least three people, who are not directly involved in the matter. One member of this panel must be independent of the management and running of the school. The Complaints Panel will investigate the issue to ensure that the initial stages have been followed appropriately and the school has responded properly to the complaint at these stages.
- The Complaints Panel will consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and will invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that he/she can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least five days' notice of the meeting, and the opportunity to submit further information in writing if they so wish. The parent or carer may take a friend, representative or interpreter with them to the meeting if they so wish.
- After hearing the complaint and all the evidence, the Complaint Panel may ask questions to clarify any issues. They will also hear from the Head Teacher who will present the school's position and will question him/her about this. The Complaints Panel will then consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The Complaints Panel will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

- Whether the issues are resolved through formal procedure or panel hearing, the school adopts the actions proffered by these procedures.
- The School provides findings and recommendations of the panel to the complainant and where relevant to the person complained about.
- The school provides correspondence, statements and records relating to the individual complaint and are kept confidential except where legal requirements are needed.
- The Customer care unit, logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. The Quality Assurance and Control department examines this log on an annual basis.
- This policy is made available to all parents and carers, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

- i. Head Teacher: resolves complaints within 48 hours
- ii. Customer care: logs complaints immediately
- iii. Executive Director Academics: resolves informal complaints that were not satisfactorily resolved at the *Head Teacher level* (for College section).
- iv. Director of Studies: resolves informal complaints that were not satisfactorily resolved at the *Head Teacher level* (for Infant and Junior sections).
- v. CEO: receive formal complaints
- vi. Panel: hears complaints

The Head Admin and the Head Quality Assurance and Control are to implement this policy

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

The Quality Assurance and Control Department as well as all Head Teacher and the Executive Director Academic Affairs monitor the complaints policy, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

This policy was last reviewed in June 2017; amendment to this policy will be made if necessary, by the School's Education Leaderships Team (ELT) by June 2019.