



Complaints Policy

There were no complaints registered under the formal procedure in the previous school year

This policy applies to all parents and pupils at the school, including those of children in the EYFS

Introduction

Chafyn Grove works hard to provide an environment in which both its children and parents are happy. However, we are obliged to have procedures in place in case we fall short of that standard. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases. If any parent is unhappy with the care that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the most appropriate teacher immediately.

We give careful consideration to all complaints, responding to and dealing with them as swiftly as possible. The school will endeavour to deal with complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way, taking action where appropriate. The relevant timescales are listed clearly below.

The complainant can refer their complaint to ISI who can be contacted regarding concerns about a school on:

Tel. 020 7710 9900 concerns@isi.net

EYFS

We shall keep a written record of any complaint relating to our fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

OFSTED's contact details are: 0300 123 1231 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The School will provide Ofsted/ISI on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

The Complaints Process

Stage One: Informal resolution

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the most appropriate teacher, tutor, Head of Department or Deputy. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All Chafyn staff will always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's wellbeing. The teacher contacted will make a written note (dated) of any parental concern or complaint. Once communicated, a complaint will be responded to within three working days. If more time is needed, that will be explained within that time frame. Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the teachers above or their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure

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 Headmaster who will arrange for them to make an appointment to discuss the matter. The Headmaster considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage. The Headmaster will keep written records of all actions and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the Headmaster 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 Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision. Normally no complaint dealt with at any level below the Governing Body should remain unresolved for longer than five working days. When resolution will take longer than this, the parent must be kept informed and told why. **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.** Should a parent have a complaint about the Headmaster, s/he should first make an informal approach via Mrs Ward to the governing body, who are obliged to investigate it within one working week. The Governors in question will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint involving a panel hearing, as outlined below.

Stage 3: Panel Hearing

If an informal complaint and subsequent discussions have failed to resolve an issue, then a formal complaint should be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and the actions of the school so far. This written complaint should be sent to the Chairman of Governors, who will convene a complaints panel. The complaints panel, represented by **no fewer than two Governors** (neither of whom is involved in the matter under investigation) **and one other person independent of the management and running of the school**, must consider all written complaints within a maximum of three working weeks. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the complaint; the panel will give the parents at least three days' notice of the meeting, allowing for parents to attend the meeting and be accompanied at the meeting if they so wish. After hearing all the evidence, including that gathered through

further investigation, should it be necessary, the panel will consider their findings and will reach a decision. They may make recommendations. This process will be completed within 7 days of the hearing. **The Panel's findings, their reasons and any recommendations, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about.** The Governing body does all it can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will 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 or where any other legal obligation prevails.

In addition to the procedures above:

- This policy is available to all staff and pupils;
- Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith;
- All written records of complaints are reviewed annually by both the Headmaster and the Chairman of Governors;
- Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils;
- Complaints relating to Boarding will be clearly identified as such in records.

Appendix: Complaints Procedure – Independent Member of the Panel

The DfE has supplied the following guidance in a letter to the ISC General Secretary: Whilst we do not intend to be prescriptive our general view is that suitable people would be those who have held positions of responsibility and who are used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments/points. It would add credibility if independent panel members had some standing in the local community. In this connection serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background – perhaps retired members of the Police Force – might be considered suitable by schools. Schools will have their own views and may well have other suitable suggestions to make.

At all stages, a written record is to be kept by the school of all complaints and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stages or proceed to a panel hearing. All 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 163 of the 2002 Education Act requests access to them.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headmaster or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will only consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by Chafyn Grove other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation	<p>Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0300 465 0108</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exclusion of children from school*	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Whistleblowing	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be</p>

	made at: www.education.gov.uk/contactus . Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education depending on the substance of your complaint.
• Staff grievances	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
• Staff conduct	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
• Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against Chafyn Grove in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.