



Complaints Policy January 2023

We hope that you find the services offered by Park House School (PHS) to be of a high standard. However, should you have any concerns or wish to make a complaint¹, in the first instance, please speak or write to the member of staff concerned, or the Principal.

Dr Tom Crossland	Mrs Beth Hope
Principal	Chair of Proprietors
Park House School	c/o Park House School
Park House	Wisbech Road
Thorney	Thorney
Peterborough	Peterborough
PE6 0SA	PE6 0SA
Tel: 01733 271187	01733 271187

This will trigger the complaints policy & processes as set out on Pages 2 and 3 of this document.

Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our pupils, and that the Principal and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there is any reason for parents to make a complaint. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

Aims and objectives

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the pupil above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved, using the 3-stage process detailed below.

Social Media

In order for complaints to be resolved as quickly and fairly as possible, we request the complainants do not discuss complaints publicly via social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Complaints will be dealt with confidentially for those involved, and we expect complainants to observe confidentiality also.

The complaints process

PHS operates a 3 phase complaints process:

¹ If your complaint/concern involves a safeguarding concern the complainant should refer to the Safeguarding and/or Whistleblowing policy.

Phase 1: An informal level whereby the complainant and the school work together to address the concerns raised. The school will aim to respond to the informal complaint within 5 working days. We work very hard to ensure that each pupil is happy at school, and is making good progress. We want to know if a pupil is experiencing a problem at the earliest stage possible, so that we can take action to prevent the problem escalating and seriously affecting how the pupil feels about school, and to minimise the effect on a pupil's progress.

If any parent is concerned about anything to do with any aspect of their child's life at school, we ask that they contact us as soon as possible so that they can discuss the matter with the appropriate member of staff. Most concerns can be dealt with relatively quickly and easily in this way.

Phase 2: Where resolution cannot be reached under Phase 1, the complainant makes a formal written complaint that is then investigated by the Principal and a written response is sent to the complainant within 10 working days.

If a parent feels that their concern has not been resolved satisfactorily through contact with the appropriate member of staff, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature to bypass Phase 1, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Principal either in person or by telephone. The Principal will take any such complaint very seriously and investigate each case thoroughly. The majority of complaints should normally be able to be resolved at this stage.

Phase 3: If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of Phase 2 for any valid reason, they have the right to request a hearing before a panel of individuals. The reasons for requesting a panel hearing must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The appeal should be addressed to the Directors (see above) who will arrange for a panel of at least three people, who were not directly involved in matters detailed in the complaint, to hear the complaint and make their judgement.

The panel will endeavour to sit within 10 working days of the complaint being received by the Principal and their response will be finalised within a further five working days. The panel will be comprised of three people, at least one of these people will be independent of the management and operation of the school. Any parent attending the panel hearing can be accompanied if they wish to be.

The panel's findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about and be available for inspection on the school premises by the Directors and the Principal within seven working days of the panel hearing.

The school has received no formal complaints within the last academic year.

Recording Complaints received by the School

Sharing a concern about the Principal

Should a parent have a complaint about the Principal s/he should first make an informal approach to the Safeguarding Director, who is then obliged to investigate it. The Safeguarding Director will then put into operation the three phase complaints procedure as detailed above.

Record Keeping for Complaints

- A written record is kept of all complaints that are made under Phase 2 of the procedure and whether they are resolved following this formal procedure, or proceeding to a panel hearing; and the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act could request access to them.

Complaints regarding the fulfilment of requirements detailed within a pupil's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

- Parents concerned that the requirements of their child's EHCP are not being met should initially raise this concern with the school who will aim to respond to them within five working days.
- If the concern cannot be settled by the school or parents believe that the school has acted unfairly and/or unreasonably, in addressing their worries they should write to the Local Education Authority responsible for issuing their child's EHCP. Further information about this process is available from their LA (Local Authority).