

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to the formal complaints policy and procedure for use by parents and pupils. If you have a concern or a complaint about any aspect of school life, please contact an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible. We will deal with any issue promptly and courteously.

This policy applies to all year groups at École Jeannine Manuel (“the School”), including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The grievance procedure for staff to raise concerns is detailed separately.

2 STAGE 1: INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- 2.1 We hope that most complaints can be considered and resolved quickly and informally.
- 2.2 If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child’s teacher or principal teacher, whichever is most appropriate. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents’ satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head.
- 2.3 For serious subject-related or general academic concern, or for a pastoral or disciplinary matter, the Head should be contacted.
- 2.4 In matters regarding finance, fees and non-academic services please contact the Bursar.
- 2.5 If the complaint relates to or involves the Head, the complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Governors by writing to him: Mr Bernard Manuel c/o Clerk to the Governors, École Jeannine Manuel, 43-45 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DN.
- 2.6 We will do all we can to ensure that we respond to complaints in a highly professional manner. However, if you feel that an expression of concern has not been handled properly by a member of staff, please contact the Head. Parents are always welcome to address their serious concerns on any matter to the Head.
- 2.7 The staff concerned will make a written record of every complaint, including the date on which the complaint was received. We will endeavour to acknowledge an e-mail notification by telephone, e-mail or letter within five working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable in the school holidays. Should the matter not be resolved within a reasonable period (one not normally exceeding two weeks) or in the event that the relevant staff and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with the Formal Resolution procedure.

3 STAGE 2: FORMAL RESOLUTION

- 3.1 If you remain unhappy, please contact the Head in writing, by letter or e-mail. Full written details of the nature of the complaint, any relevant documents and full contact details should be sent by the parents, to the Head, preferably by e-mail. It would be very helpful if parents could also indicate what they envisage as the desired outcome.

- 3.2 The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, upon the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Head, or Division Head, will speak to and/or meet with the parents concerned to discuss the matter, normally within ten school days of receiving the complaint, where a school day is defined as a day during term when the school is in session. The Head or Division Head may be accompanied at this meeting, as may be appropriate in the circumstances. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the School to carry out further investigations and members of staff or pupils involved may be interviewed. The Head may ask a senior member of staff to act as investigator and/or may involve one or more of the Governors.
- 3.3 Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- 3.4 Once the Head 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 within ten school days. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.
- 3.5 Written complaints about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days.
- 3.6 If a complaint cannot be resolved at the Head's level, then the complaint may be referred to a panel convened by the Chair of Governors.

4 STAGE 3: APPEALS PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The School takes complaints seriously and will strive to resolve any complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant as soon as possible and with an open and fair approach. If having discussed the matter with the Head, you still feel dissatisfied then please contact the Chair of the Board of Governors, directly or via the Clerk to the governors, no later than 365 days after the incident giving rise to the complaint.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Board of Governors (or a nominated governor) will convene a panel of at least two governors and one person independent of the management and running of the School to consider the complaint. No member of the panel may have any involvement with any matter detailed in the complaint. You can write to the Chair of the Board of Governors in confidence and your request will be acknowledged within ten school days and a date for the hearing will be arranged within a further ten school days.
- 4.3 Whenever possible, the panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. The panel will make a decision concerning the appropriate course of action during their initial meeting so as to prevent there being any delays with the resolution of the complaint.
- 4.4 Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how it should be carried out. If further documents or information is required, copies will be supplied to the complainant at least two days before the hearing.
- 4.5 At the panel hearing, the complainant(s) may be accompanied by one other person e.g. a relative or friend. Legal representation will only be permitted if the chair of the panel considers it appropriate.

- 4.6 After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within seven days of the meeting or hearing or as soon as reasonably practicable. The panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within seven days of reaching this decision. The panel's findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Chair of the Board of Governors, the Head and, where relevant, the person(s) about whom the complaint was made and will also be made available for inspection on the premises by the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Head. The decision of the panel will be final.
- 4.7 Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to the 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 Education and Skills Act requests access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

5 RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.1 Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 33(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards England) Regulations 2014; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.
- 5.2 Written records of all formal complaints and their outcomes (including at what stage they were resolved) will be kept (for at least 7 years where there are no safeguarding implications) and reviewed at least annually by The Head, as appropriate. The written record should confirm any action taken by the School as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether it was upheld. The record will enable the School to identify whether review or change in practice is needed so that patterns can be identified and so that appropriate intervention is made.
- 5.3 Records of Complaints Proceedings will be processed and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and the GDPR. Further information can be found in the School's Data Protection and Retention of Records Policies.
- 5.4 Parents may contact Ofsted if they do not believe that the School is meeting the EYFS requirements.

Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

6 Record of Formal Complaints

The list below details formal complaints received by the School each year since its opening.

- 2015 – 2016: no formal complaints
- 2016 – 2017: no formal complaints
- 2017 – 2018: no formal complaints

- 2018 – 2019: no formal complaints
 - 2019 – 2020: no formal complaints
 - 2020 – 2021: no formal complaints
 - 2021 – 2022: no formal complaints
-