Gloverspiece Minifarm & School

Complaints Procedure & Log

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INTRODUCTION

Gloverspiece School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

Who can make a complaint?

A complaint can be brought by a parent of a registered child at the school, or a parent who has an ongoing complaint that they raised while their child was registered at the school. The complainant must feel able to raise concerns and complaints with members of staff without formality, either in person, by telephone or in writing.

Timescales:

We aim to resolve any complaints promptly. Timescales for each stage of the Complaints Procedure are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. For the purpose of this policy, a "working day" is defined as a weekday during term time, when the school is open. The definition of "working day" excludes weekends and Bank Holidays. For the avoidance of doubt, term dates are published on the school's website, and information about term dates is made available to parents and pupils periodically.

STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- Generally, it is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint, they should contact a member of the leadership team. This can be done in written form (e.g. email), telephone call or face-to-face. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If this member of leadership cannot resolve the complaint, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headteacher directly.
- In response to stage, one concerns/complaints, leadership will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 14 working days, or if the school and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then 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 Headteacher and outline that they are raising this formally. Your complaint will be acknowledged normally within 24 hours of receipt. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

- In most cases, the Headteacher will speak to the parents concerned, normally within three working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations.
- The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headteacher 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, normally within a further 7 working days. The Headteacher will also give reasons for his decision.
- Please note that, as some staff are not available through the holiday period, the complaint may take longer to resolve at this time. The aim would always be to resolve within 28 days.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they can request that the complaint (as written above) be referred to a Panel hearing - that being Stage 3 of this Procedure. This referral should be made in writing within 5 working days following the procedure below.
- If a stage 2 concern/complaint is raised that implicates the Headteacher, then a suitably identified member of the complaints panel (external to the school organisation) will manage the complaint.

STAGE 3 – PANEL HEARING

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a member of the panel who has been appointed by the Headteacher to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school.
- Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Headteacher. A member of the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three working days before the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate at this stage.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts, they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a

- decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within working days 14 days of the Hearing.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents or complainant, the Headteacher, and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made, whether they are resolved following formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).
- Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.
- Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except insofar as is required of the
- School by Part 7, paragraph 8.1(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations April 2019; except where the Secretary of State or a body inspecting section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Additional Notes

The current complaints procedure does not apply to prospective pupils, and therefore, it does not cover failure to admit such pupils.

- In line with the Independent School Standard Regulations (2014) the current complaints policy/procedure only needs to apply to relation to complaints from parents of pupils, for example, persons for whom education is being provided at the school. Therefore, the process does not cover complaints from parents of pupils who have left voluntarily or as a result of being excluded (except in cases where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at the school).
- If a parent does not exercise the right to attend a panel hearing, this does not remove the school's obligation to hold the hearing in conformity with the current complaints policy. The

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher or by a member of the SLT on the Headteacher's behalf.

Year Number of Complaints Raised Formally in Line with Stages 2 / 3 of this policy	
2021/2022	**0**
2022/2023	**0**
2023/2024	**0**
2024/2025	**0**
2025/2026	**0**