



COMPLAINTS POLICY INCLUDING EYFS

General Statement

St Martin's School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. We strive to provide excellent education in an enriching environment and to develop the talents and abilities of each individual pupil. The relationship we have with parents is very important to us and we realise that it is essential for us to work together positively to support the children that attend the school including EYFS.

At St Martin's, we work hard to maintain an effective partnership between the school and parents. We endeavour to communicate frequently with parents and this is done on an ongoing basis over the course of the year: we send out a regular newsletter to keep parents abreast of activities and relevant issues; we use the school website and Facebook for further updates; reports are issued twice each year, in the autumn and summer terms; parents' consultation evenings are held in the autumn and spring terms.

In addition, if parents have any queries on a day-to-day basis, they are encouraged to have an informal word with the class teacher or a relevant staff member at the end of the day or set up an appointment if required. Parents are able to contact the Headteacher or any other member of staff with more serious concerns.

St Martin's School aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. Careful consideration will be given to all complaints, and they should be dealt with as swiftly as possible. St Martin's has the intention to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, the interests of the child are put above all else. St Martin's School aims to provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

Records of complaints and confidentiality.

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 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003, where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection, or where any other legal obligation prevails.

EYFS

Parents of Children in EYFS are entitled to make a complaint to ISI (The inspecting authority) and Ofsted about the provision. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

The Complaints Process

The School recognises the importance of having procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that should be followed in such cases:

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's Teacher. 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 them to consult the Headteacher.
- Complaints made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant Teacher unless the Headteacher deems it appropriate for them to deal with the matter personally.
- • The Teacher 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 7 days or in the event that the Teacher 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. The Head 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 7 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. The Head will also give reasons for his decision.
- This should normally be completed within two weeks of receiving the complaint, however, depending on other external factors (such as school holidays); this may take up to four weeks to complete.
- **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3** of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

• If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the person appointed by the School 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 nominated person, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 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 7 days prior to 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.

- 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 7 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 recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. They will also be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Head.**

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 by the Secretary of State and inspectors operating under section 109 of the 2008 Act.

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

ISI inspectorate responsible for the inspection of St Martin's School. Parent's may contact ISI through the website:

www.isi.net

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. Written records are kept of all complaints received by the school, and they record how they were resolved, including whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether there has been a Hearing.

The policy is made available to all parents on the website, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints procedure.

The school keeps a written record of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved following a formal procedure or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing. The written record will identify the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld).

St Martin's School EYFS - Addendum to Complaints Procedure

Parents of Children in Reception (EYFS) are entitled to make a complaint to ISI (The inspecting authority) and Ofsted about the provision. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

The contact details for both organisations are:

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House
9 - 12 Long Lane London
EC1A 9HA

Telephone 0207 600 0100

Complaints procedure homepage:-

<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisation/ofsted/about/complaints-procedure>

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD

General helpline 0300 123 1231 Textphone number: 0161 618 8524

Any complaint made about the Reception (EYFS) will be kept on record for at least three years.

The school will provide ISI (and Ofsted for EYFS), on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of the complaint.