



Complaints

Policy Statement

The Local Governing Body, Headmistress and staff at Rowan Preparatory School are committed to providing the best experience for pupils and parents. We understand that when there is dissatisfaction and a parent, carer, or pupil wishes to express their concern or make a complaint we have a duty to listen, investigate and communicate.

Parents are encouraged to make concerns known to staff so they can be addressed in partnership with the school. We seek to resolve concerns immediately through discussion, and staff are required to co-operate fully with any person appointed to investigate a concern or complaint submitted by a parent or member of the wider public.

At Rowan Preparatory school we aim to:-

- Take all concerns and complaints seriously
- Make every effort to deal with complaints informally and at an early stage, in the spirit of partnership
- Resolve all complaints within 28 actual working days of the complaint being received
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in line with the procedures set out in this document
- Ensure that complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils
- Ensure that, where appropriate, a full and fair investigation of the issue is undertaken
- Ensure that no-one, including pupils, is penalised for making a complaint in good faith
- Keep a written record, for at least three years, of all complaints, the action taken and at what stage they were resolved. (Note: this information is provided to ISI at their request)
- Review regularly at senior leadership level the written record of complaints and their outcomes
- Keep confidential all records relating to individual complaints except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, as amended, requests access to them

A record of formal complaints and their outcomes is kept by the Headmistress' PA and is reviewed regularly by the Headmistress, to identify whether review or change of practice is needed and so that patterns can be identified and appropriate interventions made.

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the last school year (2015/2016) was 1 (one).

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting. This document is available in line with our Provision of Information Policy to all interested parties on our website, www.rowanprepschool.co.uk and available on request from the school office. It should be read in conjunction with the United Learning Whistleblowing Policy.

Rowan is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunity Policy document. Rowan seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures set out in the rest of this document.

Procedure

Making a Complaint to the School

There will be three prescribed stages for the complainant to follow.

Stage 1 Informal Resolution of a Concern

- Most concerns will be resolved quickly and informally (within 5 working days).
- If a parent has a concern they should normally contact their daughter's class teacher, or if more appropriate the person within the school who is most closely involved with the cause for concern.
- Through dialogue and, where required, agreed action we hope to resolve the complaint informally. The person dealing with the concern will make a written record of the concern, the date and the actions discussed and agreed. If the complainant is not satisfied with the informal response to the complaint then he or she should move to stage 2.
- Concerns made directly to a senior member of staff will usually be referred to the relevant person responsible unless the senior member of staff deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution of a Complaint

- If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their concern in writing (see Appendix 1) to the Headmistress, or if the complaint is about the Headmistress to the Chair of the Local Governing Body. At this point it becomes a formal complaint. The Headmistress will decide the appropriate course of action and acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days of receipt.
- In most cases, a senior member of staff not so far involved in the complaint will investigate and provide a written account of findings and recommended resolution, normally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the senior member of staff to carry out further investigations: written records of meetings held in relation to the complaint will be kept.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed in writing within 28 days of the school having received the complaint. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3.
(NB: where working days are identified, these are specified as school days)

Stage 3: Formal Panel Hearing

- If a complainant seeks to proceed to Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the Local Governing Body who will establish a Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be dealt with by the Complaints Panel. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, this may include members of the Local Governing Body however one of panel shall be independent of the management and running of the School. The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 15 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 prior to the hearing.
- The parent may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative or friend. Similarly, the Headmistress may be accompanied. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate, and the proceedings will not be recorded via an electronic recording device without the consent of both the Chairman of the Complaints Panel and the parent; any recording will be used only to assist the Panel members in reaching their decision and formulating their reasons, and will belong to the School.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent’s 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten working days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parent informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final.
- The Panel’s findings and any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parent, the Headmistress, the Local Governing Body and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy of any findings is made available for inspection at the school by the Headmistress
- The decision of the LGB Complaints Appeal Panel is final.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Written complaints about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements must be investigate and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. Records of complaints are maintained for three years and made available to ISI on request.

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

Should parents wish they may raise concerns directly with the Independent School Inspectorate or with Ofsted (for EYFS).

ISI CAP House 9-12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HA Phone: 0207 600 0100 Email: info@isi.net	Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD Phone regarding concerns: 0300 123 1231 Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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The school keeps written records of all formal complaints for three years and identifies at which stage they were resolved.

ISI will be provided, 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

This document is reviewed annually by the Compliance Administrator or as events or legislation change requires. The next scheduled date for review is November 2018.

Appendix 1: Complaints Form

Please complete and return to the Headmistress who will acknowledge and explain what action will be taken.	
Your Name	
Pupil's name	
Your relationship to pupil	
Address	
Postcode	
Contact telephone number (1)	
Contact telephone number (2)	
Please give details of your complaint below	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (To whom did you speak and what was the response?)	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork?	YES / NO
If so, please give details	
Signature:	Date:

For School use			
Date acknowledgment sent		Complaint resolved at which stage	
Acknowledgement sent by		Complaint recorded in school records	
Complaint referred to			
Complaint referred on (date)			