

Kingsbrook School

'A unique service for unique young people'

Complaints Procedure for Parents, Carers and Others

Priory Kingsbrook School

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Complaints Procedure for Parents, Carers and Others

1. Introduction

Kingsbrook is committed to developing a strong sense of partnership with parent/carers and other members of the local community. This provides a good basis for understanding and resolution if things appear to go wrong.

This local procedure describes the procedure to be followed when complaints are made by parents/carers and others about the conduct of Kingsbrook or the actions of any member of staff.

2. What Constitutes a Complaint in our Procedure?

We accept the Local Government Ombudsman's definition of a complaint, which when applied to Kingsbrook, covers the following areas:-

“A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of actions, by a school or its staff affecting an individual or a group”

Members of the public, parents/carers and students may legitimately express dissatisfaction about aspects of our work.

The consideration of a complaint will include all relevant statutory requirements, LEA advice and accepted good practice. In addition, all reasonable actions or omissions will be taken into consideration regarding the circumstances of the case.

3. Why Have We Adopted a General Complaints Procedure?

We hope that the adoption of a clear complaints procedure will help to ensure that most complaints are resolved quickly and smoothly and as close to the source of the misunderstanding or problem as possible. In this way complainants can feel assured from the outset of a fair hearing, in line with a defined procedure for dealing with issues that have not immediately been resolved. We also hope that a staged framework might prevent an early and unnecessary escalation of the problem. In addition, we will ensure that lessons learned from the investigation of complaints will prove useful to improve Kingsbrook local procedures and practice.

4. The Policy's Guiding Principles

- Simplicity - simple, well publicised stages;
- Access - complainants knowing exactly where, how and to whom they should complain;
- Speed and Clarity - complaints being dealt with promptly, effectively and professionally within stated time limits and at the earliest stage possible;
- Action - action being agreed and reviewed, with complainants kept informed of progress throughout each stage of the procedure;
- Objectivity - beyond the first informal stage of investigation of a complaint against an individual, the subject of the complaint will not deal with it, but will instead refer it to his or her manager;
- Development - opportunities for Kingsbrook to consider current practice on the basis of what complainants are saying.

5. Our Procedure for Handling Complaints

5.1 Response Standards

We believe that most complaints can be resolved satisfactorily by informal discussion either over the telephone or through a meeting involving the key people involved.

We will acknowledge complaints within 5 working days and give a full response to complaints within 2 weeks. If the complaint is judged to involve complex issues, complainants will be informed within 2 weeks when they can expect a full response. Complainants will be kept informed of progress if a lengthy investigation is involved. The main aim throughout the process is to resolve the matter as quickly and effectively as possible, to everybody's satisfaction.

5.2 Stage One: Informal Complaints

Parents/carers and others should raise informal complaints or concerns with the Student's Key Worker. Parents will be encouraged to make prior appointments to discuss any issues that are not of a routine nature. Criticisms of the professional conduct or competence of a member of staff which may be brought to the named worker will be referred to Kingsbrook Head of School.

If a parent believes that a complaint or concern is sufficiently serious or sensitive they should talk to the Head of School, who will investigate or arrange for the complaint to be investigated and

then report back in writing or, more usually at this informal stage, through a discussion with the complainant.

Every effort will always be made to resolve the problem at this informal stage. Complainants who remain dissatisfied at this stage will be informed that they have the opportunity to make a formal complaint.

In some cases, matters affecting general policy or procedures at Kingsbrook may be judged by the Head of School to be an appropriate area for further discussion by senior management in order to resolve the complaint. In these circumstances care will be taken to ensure that the identity of the complainant and the individual complained of are not disclosed in case further, more formal procedures are involved at a later stage.

5.3 Stage Two: Formal Complaints

Formal complaints should be made in writing (if required support will be offered to the individual to ensure this can happen) and will normally be investigated by the Head of School. If the complaint directly concerns the Head of School however, complainants should contact the schools Operations Director.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Head of School's response, they should contact the Operation Director (contact details in Appendix 1) who will consult with the complainant over how the complaint should be further pursued.

If the parents or carers are still not satisfied with the response they should inform John Anderson (Managing Director, England & Wales), who will arrange a panel to hear the complaint. The panel will comprise three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One member of the panel will be independent of the running and management of the school. The date of the panel meeting will be arranged to take account of the convenience of the parents or carers as well as the school and will take place within a time limit of fifteen working days.

Parents or carers will be invited to bring with them another person or persons to support them at the panel hearing if they wish.

The panel will hear the complaint and will hear the outcome of the school's investigations and its response to these. The panel will then make findings and recommendations which will be communicated in writing, by electronic mail or otherwise, within five working days to the Managing Director, Operations Director, parents or carers and, where appropriate, the person complained about; a copy will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Managing Director.

A written record of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing will be kept. These records and any correspondence relating to a complaint will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the Education Act 2002 requests access to the records.

If written complaints are received by the company, they will be passed to the Head of School and/or Operations Director to investigate.

The complainant will receive a written response to their complaint. A meeting may also be arranged to convey the response to the complaint.

In some cases, a complaint may lead to disciplinary action against an individual, for which there are separate procedures. If this is the case the complainant will be informed that the complaint will be pursued through disciplinary action.

5.4 Stage Three – Appeal

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage Two investigations, complainants may appeal to the Managing Director for a final resolution of their complaint.

Under this complaints procedure, there is no provision for further appeal beyond consideration by the Managing Director.

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Appendix (1) – Contact Addresses

Kingsbrook School
Southburgh,
Thetford
Norfolk
IP25 7TJ

Telephone:

01953 852303

Email:

kingsbrookscool@priorygroup.com

Head of School:

Ursula Castillo – ursulacastillo@priorygroup.com

Operations Director:

Leon Brandon – leonbrandon@priorygroup.com

Complaints Procedure for Parents, Carers and Others

YOU MAY WISH TO USE THIS FORM TO HELP YOU DETAIL YOUR COMPLAINT

To:	
FORMAL COMPLAINT (Please use capital letters to complete form)	
Student Name:	
Your Name: Address:	
Telephone:	
Signed: Date:	
My complaint is about:	

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Section 2

Details of my complaint:

Signed:

Date:

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ACTION TAKEN:

BY WHOM: _____

POSITION: _____

DATE: _____

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:

SIGNED : _____

DATE : _____