



The Parks School

Motivate • Challenge • Support

Complaints Policy

“Our mission is to **inspire** growth, **nurture** potential and **support** one another with **passion**, upholding **integrity** and fostering **respect** whilst promoting **empowerment** with everything we do”

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Policy Version: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Policy Lead: Headteacher

Approved By: Proprietor

1. Statement of Intent

The Parks School is committed to maintaining strong, positive and respectful relationships with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community.

We welcome feedback, concerns and complaints as an important part of school improvement and quality assurance. We aim to resolve concerns quickly, fairly, openly and proportionately whilst maintaining the wellbeing, dignity and rights of all individuals involved.

We encourage concerns to be raised at the earliest opportunity so that issues can be addressed constructively and relationships maintained.

2. Our Approach

The Parks School's complaints process is underpinned by our core values:

MOTIVATE

We encourage open communication, constructive feedback and positive partnerships with families and stakeholders.

We will:

- Listen carefully to concerns.
- Promote respectful dialogue.
- Encourage early resolution.
- Use feedback to improve provision.
- Value the views of pupils, parents and staff.

CHALLENGE

We will investigate concerns fairly, objectively and thoroughly.

We will:

- Consider all evidence.
- Ensure accountability.
- Maintain high professional standards.
- Learn from complaints.
- Challenge poor practice where identified.

SUPPORT

We will support all individuals involved in a complaint.

We will:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate.
- Provide clear information throughout the process.
- Ensure accessibility for all parties.
- Promote fair and proportionate outcomes.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations
- Independent School Standards Regulations (Part 7)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Current Edition)
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

4. Scope

This policy applies to complaints made by:

- Parents and carers.
- Pupils.

- Members of the public.
- External agencies.

This policy does not apply to:

- Staff grievances (covered by the Grievance Policy).
 - Whistleblowing concerns (covered by the Whistleblowing Policy).
 - Safeguarding allegations (covered by the Safeguarding Policy).
 - Complaints relating to staff disciplinary matters.
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5. Principles

The Parks School will ensure that complaints are:

- Taken seriously.
- Investigated fairly.
- Handled impartially.
- Resolved as quickly as possible.
- Recorded appropriately.
- Used to improve practice.

No pupil or parent will be disadvantaged for raising a complaint in good faith.

6. Accessibility

The school will make reasonable adjustments to support complainants who may require:

- Alternative formats.
- Translation services.
- Additional support during meetings.
- Accessible communication methods.

The school is committed to ensuring that the complaints process is accessible to all.

7. Confidentiality

Complaints will be handled confidentially.

Information will only be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis.
- Where safeguarding concerns arise.
- Where required by law.
- Where requested by regulatory bodies.

Records will be maintained in accordance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation.

8. Stage One – Informal Resolution

Most concerns can be resolved informally.

Parents/carers should initially discuss concerns with the most appropriate member of staff.

The school will aim to:

- Acknowledge concerns promptly.
- Listen carefully.
- Clarify issues.
- Seek an agreed resolution.

A written record may be kept where appropriate.

The school aims to resolve informal concerns within **5 school working days**.

9. Stage Two – Formal Complaint

If the matter is not resolved informally, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher.

The complaint should include:

- Details of the concern.
- Actions already taken.
- Desired outcome.

The school will:

- Acknowledge receipt within 5 school working days.
- Investigate the complaint.
- Meet with relevant parties where necessary.
- Provide a written response.

A formal response will normally be provided within **10 school working days**.

Where additional investigation is required, the complainant will be informed of revised timescales.

10. Complaints About the Headteacher

Complaints concerning the Headteacher should be submitted directly to the Proprietor.

The Proprietor will:

- Investigate the complaint.
- Seek relevant information.
- Communicate outcomes in writing.
- Determine whether further action is required.

11. Stage Three – Complaints Panel

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a Complaints Panel Hearing.

The request must be made in writing within **10 school working days** of receiving the Stage Two outcome.

The Panel will:

- Consist of at least three individuals.
- Include one member independent of the management and running of the school.
- Be impartial and objective.
- Review all relevant evidence.

The complainant may attend and be accompanied by a supporter if they wish.

12. Complaints Panel Outcomes

The Panel may:

- Uphold the complaint in full.
- Uphold the complaint in part.
- Dismiss the complaint.
- Recommend actions to improve practice.
- Recommend policy or procedural changes.

Written findings will normally be issued within **5 school working days** of the hearing.

The decision of the Panel is final within the school's procedures.

13. Safeguarding Complaints

Any complaint involving:

- Child protection concerns.
- Allegations against staff.
- Pupil welfare concerns.

Will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Safeguarding concerns may be referred to external agencies where appropriate.

14. Record Keeping

The school will maintain records of:

- Formal complaints.
- Investigations undertaken.
- Correspondence.
- Panel hearings.
- Outcomes and recommendations.

Records will be retained securely for a minimum of three years.

15. Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints

The school recognises that a small number of complaints may become unreasonable due to:

- Repeated correspondence without new evidence.
- Aggressive or abusive behaviour.
- Unreasonable demands on staff time.

The school may:

- Limit communication methods.
- Appoint a single point of contact.
- Conclude correspondence where appropriate.

Any such decision will be proportionate, fair and clearly communicated.

16. Learning from Complaints

The school views complaints as an opportunity for improvement.

Senior leaders will regularly review:

- Trends.
- Recurring themes.
- Outcomes.
- Policy implications.

Findings will inform school improvement planning.

17. Monitoring and Review

The Proprietor will monitor:

- Number of formal complaints.
- Complaint themes.
- Resolution timescales.
- Policy effectiveness.

An annual review will be undertaken.

Related Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Staff Grievance Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
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Appendix A – Appropriate Channels for Complaints

Topic of Complaint	Appropriate Channels
Specific to your child	From the class teacher to the Headteacher
General suggestion to the school	Assistant Head to Headteacher
General complaint to teacher	From the teacher to the Headteacher
Pastoral complaint	From the teacher to the Headteacher
Financial complaint	To the Headteacher

Appendix B – Summary of Complaints Procedures

Concern	Please do raise these with the school so that they can be resolved as quickly as possible
Informal Complaint	Significant or persistent concerns should be discussed with those involved. It is hoped that most problems can be dealt with in this way
Formal Complaint	A formal complaint is one made in writing and addressed directly to the Headteacher
Appeals	Where the complaint is not satisfied with the response to their written complaint, the Proprietor will make provision for a hearing before a panel of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint