



**HALSTEAD**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## **Complaints Procedure For Parents**

### **Introduction**

Underpinning the aims of our school is the belief that education is a partnership between home and school. We believe that children gain the greatest benefit from school and feel secure when parents and teachers work together.

Halstead governors and staff want parents to feel free to tell the school about any concerns or worries they may have and to be confident that something will be done. We aim to deal with things confidentially, sensitively and quickly.

This policy is issued to all parents in the parent handbook and it is available to prospective parents from the school office.

This policy applies to the parents of all pupils in the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), i.e. Nursery and Kindergarten.

### **The Informal approach**

In most cases:

1. Parents are invited to share concerns in conversation with the appropriate class teacher.
2. If that does not resolve the problem the Headmistress may be approached, either in person, by appointment, or by letter.
3. The staff involved will keep a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date they were received. Should the matter fail to be resolved within two weeks or in the event that the parent and teacher fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with the 'formal' procedure.

Our guiding principles for handling concerns will be:

1. Speedy resolution, if possible, with interim response and maintenance of contact where dealing with the issue takes time.
2. Sensitivity to the feelings of all who may be involved in addressing the concern.
3. Confidentiality, appropriate to the concern.

## **The Formal Procedure**

1. Where the grievance concerns the Headmistress or the management of an issue by the Headmistress
  - A full written report of the complaint should be submitted, via the school, to the Chairman of Governors. (This should be within two weeks of receiving the Headmistress's written reply, where applicable).
  - If the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved in correspondence with the Chairman of Governors, the Chairman will, within ten days, arrange a hearing by a Panel. The panel will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One panel member will be a person totally independent of the management and running of the school.
  - Parents may attend and be accompanied at the panel hearing if they wish.
  - A copy of the panel's findings and recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. The findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the governors and headteacher.
  - The findings will be communicated within five working days of the hearing.
  - A written record is kept in the office of all complaints stating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.
  - All correspondence, statements and records relating to the individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

Parents have a right to ask for the number of formal complaints made during the preceding year.

## Nursery and Kindergarten

For EYFS records of complaints will be kept for at least three years and parents can complain directly to Ofsted or ISI if they wish.

Ofsted details: telephone 08456 404045, or write to:

### Enquiries

National Business Unit  
Ofsted  
Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA.

### ISI details:

Independent Schools Inspectorate details: telephone 020 7600 0100 or write to:  
CAP House  
9 - 12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA

This policy was reviewed autumn 2009 and will be reviewed again autumn 2011