



# ASHBROOKE HOUSE SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AGED 3 TO 11

## ASHBROOKE HOUSE SCHOOL

### Item J PARENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Ashbrooke House School is proud of the quality of its teaching and the care given to its pupils. Nevertheless, parents may occasionally have concerns they wish to raise and the school will receive those concerns in a positive and constructive manner.

#### Stage 1 – Initial Actions.

If a parent has a complaint which involves any aspect of classroom life they should in the first instance contact the class teacher. If the matter is of a broader nature and involves organization or a health, safety and welfare issue a parent should contact the Headteacher. It is hoped that most complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. A written record will be kept of all meetings, interviews and telephone conversations held in relation to the complaint and it is hoped that a satisfactory resolution will be found within 7 days.

#### Stage 2 – Written Complaint

- a) If a parent feels that the complaint is serious enough to warrant a written format they may address the complaint directly to the Headteacher.
- b) If they feel the complaint has not been resolved at an informal level then they may also then write to the Headteacher.
- c) The Headteacher will meet/speak to the parent concerned as soon as possible (within three days) to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage. The Headteacher may have to carry out further investigations after which a second meeting (within 7 days) will be held. The possible resolution of the matter may be reached at this stage. Written records will be kept by the Headteacher of all meetings, interviews and telephone conversations.
- d) The Headteacher following investigations and so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established will then make a decision and the parent will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headteacher will also give reasons for her decision.
- e) If the parent believes that a complaint is of such a nature that only the proprietors should be contacted they should address the complaint in writing to Mr & Mrs J C Teasdale at the school address marking the envelope 'Private and Confidential'. Following investigations the proprietors will respond within fourteen days. A decision will be given in writing and the reasons for the decision.

### Stage 3 – Appeal Hearing

- a) If a parent is still not satisfied with the decision then an appeal may be lodged.
- b) The parent should write to Mr Teasdale the proprietor outlining the basis of the complaint marking the letter 'Private and Confidential'. The letter should be sent to the school.
- c) A Complaints Panel consisting of Mr Teasdale, and two persons independent of the management and running of the school will then be formed. Mr Teasdale will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days. One of the two independent persons will chair the complaints panel.
- d) 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 2 days prior to the hearing.
- e) The parent may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend but must be someone who is not involved with the complaint. Legal representation is not appropriate or necessary at this stage.
- f) If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent 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 items J PARENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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- k) The parent may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend but must be someone who is not involved with the complaint. Legal representation is not appropriate or necessary at this stage.
- l) If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- m) 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 2 days of the Hearing. The Panel's decision(s) and, if any, recommendations, together with the reasons for them, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headteacher and, where relevant, the person complained of. The decision of the Panel will be final.
- n) Wherever possible the recommendations of the Panel will be adopted by the school without delay, however there may be circumstances where the proprietors are not able to carry out these recommendations due to legal constraints or where to do so would, in their view, be of significant detriment to the school. In the event of the proprietors deciding not to carry out any or part of a recommendation of the panel, the chairperson of the complaints panel will inform the parent in writing with the reasons for the non-adoption of the recommendation.
- o) If in the view of the parent the complaint has not been adequately resolved by the Complaints Panel, they may wish to take appropriate legal advice.

## Confidentiality

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously, respectfully and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)9j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the schools inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

It will be made clear to all concerned that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

It may be possible to deal with a problem without naming individuals. However it may be impractical to investigate a complaint without identifying the member of staff or the child and in these instances, the complaint will be dealt with as sensitively as possible.

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**Reviewed: February 2016**