



### Policy Document

Policy Area: Complaints

Date: August 2016

Review: August 2017

Reviewed by: Esma Izzidien

Next Review date: August 2018

#### Introduction

We believe that our school provides a broad and balanced education for all our children, and that the Director, Lead teachers and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and the community. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in the event of a possible complaint by parents. This policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases. If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately. We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the LEA. All parents have the right as a last resort, to appeal to the Welsh Assembly Government, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed. If a complaint is against the actions of the Head of Department, the Director will carry out the necessary procedures.

In respect to the CMS Nursery if the matter cannot be resolved to the complainant satisfaction, then parents / guardians have the right to raise the matter with CSSIW. Parents are made aware that they can contact CSSIW at any time they have a concern, including at all stages of the complaints procedure and are given information on how to contact them. CSSIW is the registering authority for nurseries in Wales and investigates all complaints that suggest a provider may not be meeting the requirements of the nursery's registration. It risk assesses all complaints made and may visit the nursery to carry out a full inspection where it believes requirements are not met.

#### Aims and Objectives

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

#### Legal Requirements

The Education Act 2002 Section 29 requires governing bodies to establish procedures for dealing with complaints. The Welsh Assembly Government Guidelines (Circular 3/2004) should be considered when drawing up procedures.



**The complaints process: All correspondence concerning complaints will be retained by the school and kept confidential.**

The following complains process is based on the guidelines below:

### **Stage 1**

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education provided by our school they should, in the first instance discuss the matter with the class lead teacher. A note will be made of the date and details of the complaint and the outcome. The Director & Head of Department will be informed. Most matters can be handled in this way.

If the complaint is about the Director advise the complainant to speak to the Head of Department.

*Complaint NOT Satisfied move onto next stage*

### **Stage 2**

Where a parent feels the situation has not been resolved through contact with the class lead teacher, or that the concern is of a serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with The Head of Department. Such complaints are treated very seriously and investigated thoroughly. If the complaint is about the Head of Department advise the complainant to make an appointment with the Director. Most complaints are resolved at this stage.

### **[See Appendix 1]**

*Complaint NOT Satisfied move onto next stage*

### **Stage 3**

If the Complainant is still not satisfied they will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Head of Department for further consideration. (If the complaint is about the Head of Department this should instead be sent to the Director). The Head of Department [or designated member of staff] will acknowledge the complaint in writing within three working days of receipt, giving a brief explanation of the complaints procedures and a target date for providing a response. This should be within ten working days where possible. If it is not possible to deal with the matter in this time, the complainant will be informed of when it is likely to be concluded.

### **[See Appendix 2]**

*Complaint NOT Satisfied move onto next stage*

### **Stage 4**

If unresolved the complainant will be advised in writing that if they wish to take the complaint further, they should notify the Director in writing within fifteen days of receiving the letter detailing the outcome of the complaint.

### **[See Appendix 3]**

*Complaint NOT Satisfied move onto next stage*

### **Stage 5**

If the parent is not satisfied to the response to a written complaint there will be a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of three people who have not been directly involved in matters related to the complaint. One person of the panel must be independent of the management and running of the school. Parents have the right to be accompanied to this meeting by one individual.

The Complainant and all persons present at the hearing should receive copies of the outcome of the hearing.



### Stage 6

If the problem is still not resolved by the Director the Complainant may approach the National Assembly for Wales for a review of the process undertaken in the case of matters relating to the primary section of the school.

With respect to the nursery section, if the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Complainant, then parents have the right to raise the matter with CSSIW. Parents are made aware that they can contact CSSIW at any time they have a concern, including at all stages of the complaints procedure and are given information on how to contact them. CSSIW is the registering authority for nurseries in Wales and investigates all complaints that suggest a provider may not be meeting the requirements of the nursery's registration. It risk assesses all complaints made and may visit the nursery to carry out a full inspection where it believes requirements are not met.

A record of complaints will be kept in the nursery. The record will include the name of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, date and time complaint received, action(s) taken, result of any investigations and any information given to the complainant including a dated response.

Parents will be able to access this record if they wish to, however, all personal details relating to any complaint will be stored confidentially and will be only accessible by the parties involved. CSSIW inspectors will have access to this record at any time during visits to ensure actions have been met appropriately.

### Contact details for the CSSIW:

#### National Office

Welsh Government

Rhydyccar Business Park

Merthyr Tydfil

CF48 1UZ

**Telephone:** 0300 062 8800

**Email:** [cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

Welsh Government (South East)

Rhydyccar Business Park

Merthyr Tydfil

CF48 1UZ

**Telephone:** 0300 062 8888 **Fax:** 0300 062 8548

**Email:** [cssiw.southeast@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cssiw.southeast@wales.gsi.gov.uk)



### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head of Departments and the Director monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

The Administrator logs all complaints received by school and records how they were resolved.

The Director takes into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents on request, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

### **Appendix 1**

1. The Complainant can be accompanied by a friend or relative when meeting the Head of Department / Lead teacher if desired.
2. If necessary, the Head of Early Department / Director [or designated member of staff] will interview any witnesses and take statements from those involved. If the complaint centres around a pupil, the pupil (where appropriate) will also be interviewed with a senior member of staff whom the pupil feels comfortable with. If a member of staff is complained against, they need to be made aware of the complaint, have an opportunity to respond and be accompanied by a representative if required.
3. The Head of Department [or designated member of staff] will ensure that written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation are kept.

### **Appendix 2**

Once all the relevant facts have been established, the Head of Department [or designated member of staff] will arrange a meeting with the complainant to discuss or resolve the matter. This meeting will be followed up with a letter setting out the outcome of the meeting.

### **Appendix 3**

Complaints only rarely reach this formal stage, but it is important that Director is prepared to deal with them when necessary. It should be noted that Stages 1, 2 and 3 must be completed before this stage is reached.

Formal complaints to the Director should be made in writing.

Complaints which may lead to disciplinary action should be handled in accordance with the school's appropriate procedures.

The Director will take care that they cannot be accused of prejudice by ensuring that the complaint is dealt with in coordination with another member of staff, normally the Head of Department. A hearing will be conducted where necessary.

It is important that a person against whom a complaint is made is given sufficient time, usually 10 school days, to consider all the evidence and take advice before providing a response and before the hearing takes place. The decision of the Director will be given in writing to the complainant and any person against whom the complaint is made within five working days of the hearing.

The letter will also advise the complainant that if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the procedure they may write to the Welsh Assembly Government who will carry out a further review. This further review will, however, only consider whether the complaint has been fully and fairly considered according to the school's complaints procedures; it will not rehear the substantive complaint.

Agreed by: Director, Esma Izzidien