



*This policy applies to all pupils at Town Close House including those in EYFS.*

## PARENTS' COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

All schools are now required to have a formal and transparent complaints procedure, which is set out below. However, the School would much rather hear of concerns early, long before they have grown into complaints. Concerns may be voiced to form teachers, tutors, Heads of Department, or members of the Senior Management Team, as appropriate, either formally or informally.

**A record is kept of any complaints received by the School and the actions taken as a result of the complaint. This is kept for at least three years. These records can be shared with parents on request to the Headmaster, Mr Lowe, or in the case of EYFS children, with the Head of the Pre-Prep, Mrs Walwyn.**

It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue - for example, to raise matters with the class/form teacher. When they are matters to do with sports or music, for instance, it might be best to raise the concerns with the Head of Department. These members of staff may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, they may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example the Head of the Pre-Prep or the Headmaster. This may be more appropriate when the concerns are bullying, pastoral matters or to do with the care and supervision of children.

Town Close House welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously any concerns they may raise.

**A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response.**

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so.
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way.
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously.
- we take action where appropriate.

If parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

## STAGE 1 - Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a colleague or member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Deputy Head, or the Head, will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher, unless the Head of Department, Deputy Head, or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The form teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days, or in the event that the form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.

## STAGE 2 - Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the **Headmaster, Mr G. Lowe** or the **Head of the Pre-Prep department, Mrs R. Walwyn**. Parents of children in EYFS classes (Nursery or Reception) should address their complaint to **Mrs R. Walwyn**.

Such letters should be sent to the School :

**Town Close School,  
14 Ipswich Road,  
Norwich,  
Norfolk,  
NR2 2LR.**

**Otherwise they can be sent as attachments to emails**

**[head@townclose.com](mailto:head@townclose.com) or [preprephead@townclose.com](mailto:preprephead@townclose.com)**

- The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet or speak directly to the parents concerned, normally within 5 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

### **STAGE 3 - Panel Hearing**

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days.
- 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 working days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made.

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

Parents may wish to take their complaint to OFSTED or The Independent Schools Inspectorate. In which case they are advised to contact these organisations at the following locations:

**OFSTED**

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

**Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House  
9-12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA

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