



KING'S BRUTON

(Comprising King's School, Bruton and Hazlegrove – "the School")

COMPLAINTS POLICY

This is a combined policy that applies to King's School, Bruton, Hazlegrove Preparatory School and Sunny Hill Nursery.

INTRODUCTION

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Policy.

The School encourages feedback from parents and is totally committed to working with parents to ensure that the School does all it can to maximise the educational and emotional benefits for the children. The School welcomes feedback from parents.

This Policy allows for a complaint to be made and considered on an informal basis. A written record is kept of all complaints where a parent is not satisfied with the initial response to an informal complaint and a formal complaint is made in writing. The written record is kept whether it is resolved following a formal procedure or whether it proceeds to a panel hearing. This includes the action taken by the School and as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether it is upheld. Any correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an Inspection under Section 108 or 109 Education and Skills Act 2008 (as subsequently varies or amended) requests access to them. The Governance Committee is responsible for the Complaints Policy and the policy will be reviewed annually by both Headmasters.

STAGE 1 - INFORMAL RESOLUTION

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns are resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their son's/daughter's Housemaster / Housemistress (King's – KSB), Tutor/Form Teacher for academic progress and pastoral development; or for boarding specific issues, the Houseparent (Hazlegrove – HZG) or the Nursery Manager at Sunny Hill Nursery. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the son's / daughter's Housemaster / Housemistress, Tutor/Form Teacher or Boarding Houseparent cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy

Heads or another member of SMT (KSB), or Head of Pre-Prep, Head of EYFS, or Head of Section or Head of Boarding in the Prep School as appropriate or the Deputy Head (HZG) directly. If the Sunny Hill Nursery Manager cannot resolve the matter it will be referred to the Hazlegrove Head.

Unless the Deputy Heads or another member of SMT (KSB), or Head of Pre-Prep, Head of EYFS, or Head of Section or Head of Boarding in the Prep School as appropriate, or the Deputy Head (HZG) deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally, complaints made directly to the SMT Member will usually be referred to the relevant Housemaster / Housemistress at King's while at Hazlegrove, the Head of Pre-Prep or Head of Section will usually be referred to the relevant Tutor/Form Teacher or Houseparent (if boarding specific) while complaints made directly to the Deputy Head will usually be referred via the appropriate Head of Section.

The Housemaster / Housemistress (KSB), Tutor/Form Teacher (HZG), Nursery Manager (SHN) 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 10 days, or in the event that the Housemaster / Housemistress (KSB), Tutor/Form Teacher or Boarding Houseparent (HZG) and parents 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. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headmaster will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally within 5 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. Timescales may take longer in school holidays, but matters will be dealt with as soon as practicable in those periods.

It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parents will be informed of this decision in writing, normally within 15 days. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this Procedure.

STAGE 3 – COMPLAINTS PANEL HEARING

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the 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 Complaints Panel will consist of at least three persons, not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and 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 Clerk to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 15 days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require further particulars of the complaint or any related matter supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 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. Details of this person should be supplied to the Clerk to the Governors not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.

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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, normally within 10 working days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final and binding on both the School and the parents. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made. A copy will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and the Headmaster.

COMPLAINTS CONCERNING THE HEADMASTER

If parents wish to make a complaint against the Headmaster of the School, they should make their complaint directly to the Senior Warden, through the Clerk to the Governors (contact details are given at the foot of this document).

The Senior Warden will call for a full report from the Headmaster and for all the relevant documents. He may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet the parents to discuss the matter further.

Once the Senior Warden is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Senior Warden will also give reasons for the decision taken.

If the parents are not satisfied with the decision taken by the Senior Warden, they should confirm this to the Senior Warden who will then ask the Clerk to the Governors to call a hearing of the Complaints Panel. If this should occur then the process outlined in Stage 3 above will apply.

OVERVIEW

Parents can be assured that:

- All concerns and complaints concerning any aspect of the School will be treated seriously and confidentially.
- No pupil will be penalised if a parent makes a complaint in good faith.
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where:
 - The Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them; or
 - Disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or
 - Any other legal obligation prevails.

The School will keep a written record of all complaints made that concern the School. The written record will state the nature of a complaint, whether the complaint has been resolved following a formal procedure or whether the complaint proceeded to a panel hearing.

The School will also keep a written record of action taken as a result of all complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) for a minimum of 3 years.

Number of formal complaints in the last 12 months to September 2024:

King's Bruton – nil.

Hazlegrove - one.

Sunny Hill Nursery – nil.

Number of formal complaints in the last 12 months relating to Boarding to September 2024:

King's Bruton – nil,

Hazlegrove - nil.

Sunny Hill Nursery – N/A.

If any parent of a child in the EYFS has concerns which relate to pupil welfare or child protection issues and they do not feel that these have been addressed by the school they may contact ISI or Ofsted via the details below:

Independent Schools Directorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

concerns@isi.net

Tel 0207 6000100

Complaints to Ofsted can be made by emailing enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or calling 0300 123 4666.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

If a parent of any other pupil has any concerns, including those of a more general sense, or with the quality of education and care provided they must contact ISI.

Other contacts:

If the complaint concerns a child's welfare or a safeguarding issue you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Somerset Direct – 0300 123 2224

Clerk to the Governors – Mr LS Tuson MBE – 01749 814204, lst@kingsbruton.com