

# COMPLAINTS POLICY, PROCEDURE AND RELATED FORMS

Wessex Lodge School is committed to providing quality services and achieving the highest standards of conduct. One of the ways we can continue to improve our services is by listening and responding to the views of others.

## Aims of our Complaints Policy

Wessex Lodge seeks to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible,
- we treat any complaint about our services as a clear expression of dissatisfaction which calls for a prompt response,
- we treat it seriously whether it is made in person, by telephone, by letter, by fax or by e-mail,
- we deal with it promptly - first response within 24 hours, and where appropriately, informally (for example by telephone),
- we aim to initially consider and resolve all complaints on an informal basis where possible,
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken,
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our services and publish information on complaints,
- records are kept of all complaints and the procedures followed, formal meetings are minuted and a complaints log is kept in each centre
- all complaints are resolved within 28 working days

## Guidelines for making a complaint

- 1 You can make a complaint in writing, by fax, by e-mail, by telephone or in person (by appointment please).
- 2 If you are writing, faxing or e-mailing your complaint, please provide your telephone number if a response by telephone would be convenient. If you are e-mailing, please state if a reply by e-mail is required and, if not, please provide a full postal address.
- 3 If you know the name or title of the appropriate member of Senior Staff - Head of Centre or relevant Director, please make your complaint direct to them. If you do not know the name or title, please contact Head Office Boreham Mill on 01985 218486

## What happens next?

- 1 We will respond within 24 hours (working hours) from when we receive your complaint.
- 2 If it is not possible to give you a full reply within this time, for example, if your complaint requires more detailed investigation, we will give you an interim response telling you what is being done to deal with your complaint, when you can expect the full reply (usually within 5 working days) and from whom.
- 3 The full reply will include details of who to contact next if you believe that your complaint has not been dealt with properly. This will normally be a member of the Senior Management Team.
- 4 If you are still not satisfied following the second response from the Senior Management Team, you can ask for your complaint to be formally referred to the Head of Childrens Services or a Director, who will review your complaint and how it has been handled. Formal complaints must be made in writing and sent directly to Head Office (Boreham Mill) for the attention of the Head of Childrens Services or Director.
- 5 A written response will be sent to you within 5 working days by the Head of Childrens Services or Director detailing the planned further action to be taken by the company to deal with your complaint.
- 6 This may result in the setting up of a panel hearing, (see procedures) where all participants will be given copies of all findings and recommendations.
- 7 It is our aim to conclude all complaints satisfactorily within 28 working days.

A written record will be kept at Head Office of all communication, meetings and actions taken for longer than one year, or as long as is required by law, following the date of the complaint. Copies of panel findings and recommendations will be given to complainant, Head of Centre, Director and where relevant, the person complained about. All documents are to be kept confidential, except where they are required by law to be seen.

## Procedures:

Complaints about school based activities and staff:

- 1 The person receiving the complaint completes **Form C1**. The C1 form is passed on to the Head of Centre if the complaint is received by another member of the staff.
- 2 The Head of Centre sends a copy by email to Head Office and the Head of Childrens Services.
- 3 The Head of Centre contacts complainant with interim response by letter (**Form C2**) within 24 hours (working hours) stating when the full reply will be given and by whom.
- 4 The full reply (**Form C3**) should be sent within 5 working days stating who by and how the complaint was investigated and the outcomes. If the complainant is not satisfied with this response, then he/she will be advised to make a formal complaint in writing to the Director, Formal Complaint **Form CF1** to be sent if requested.
- 5 On receipt of a Formal Complaint (**Form CF1**) the Director will contact the complainant and ascertain why the first response was unacceptable. Witness(s) will be requested to complete Form W1.
- 6 The Director will offer an initial response by phone or by letter (**Form CF2**) within 24 hours which will state when the full reply to the formal complaint will be given and by whom.
- 7 The full reply from the Director (**Form CF3**) should be sent within 5 working days stating the outcomes of the further investigation. The complainant, if still not satisfied can request that their formal complaint is referred to the Managing Director who will respond (**Form CF4**) by detailing any further action to be taken by the Company to deal with the complaint, which may result in the setting up of a panel hearing, where all participants will be given copies of all findings and recommendations.
- 8 Panel Hearings:

Statements and letters of complaint to be submitted and circulated to panel members by Head Office at least one week prior to the hearing.

The Panel to consist of at least three people not directly involved in previous consideration of the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the Management and running of the school.

Parents/Carers may attend and be accompanied if they wish.

A copy of the findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or given otherwise, to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about,

A copy (held at Head office) should be made available by the proprietor for inspection on the school premises if requested.
- 9 Following the hearing, the panel will discuss the complaint and make a decision on whether the complaint has been addressed appropriately or not.
- 10 The result of the Panel Hearing will be notified (**Form CF5**) to the complainant within 5 working days.

## Form C1 - Record of a Complaint Received

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Time:</b>	
<b>Person making the complaint:</b>			
<b>Recorded by whom and at which centre:</b>			
<b>Complaint received:</b>	By phone / in person / by letter / by fax / by email		

### Details of the Complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the event / identified problem:</b>			
<b>Nature of the issue:</b> (e.g. Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Bullying, Welfare, Behaviour)			
<b>Interim actions:</b>			
<b>Signed and Dated the reporting person:</b>			

A copy of this form should be sent to the Head of Centre, and Head Office.

## Form C2 - Initial Response to a Complaint Received (within 24 hours)

<b>Date of complaint:</b>		<b>Time of complaint:</b>	
<b>Person who made the complaint:</b>			
<b>Recorded by whom and where:</b>			
<b>Complaint received:</b>	By phone / in person / by letter / by fax / by email		
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			

### Action to be taken:

<b>Complaint to be investigated by:</b>	
<b>Number of people to be interviewed:</b>	
<b>Number of witness statements to prepare:</b>	
<b>Further investigation / actions to be taken:</b>	
<b>Other professionals to notify:</b> (e.g. Social Worker, Safeguarding - LADO, H&S Officer, Police, Local Authority)	
<b>A full response to be prepared by whom and by when:</b>	
<b>Signed and dated the investigating person:</b>	

A copy of this form should be sent to the person making the complaint, the Head Of Centre and Head Office.

### Form C3 - Full Response to a Complaint Received (within 5 days)

<b>Date of complaint:</b>		<b>Time of complaint:</b>	
<b>Person who made the complaint:</b>			
<b>Recorded by whom and where:</b>			
<b>Complaint received:</b>	By phone / in person / by letter / by fax / by email		
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			

### Investigation, action taken and outcomes:

<b>Complaint to be investigated by:</b>	
<b>Details of people interviewed:</b>	
<b>Details of witness statements received:</b>	
<b>Details of other findings:</b>	
<b>Sanctions imposed and the nature of these:</b>	
<b>Other professionals notified:</b>	
<b>Further action to be taken:</b>	
<b>Signed and dated the investigating person:</b>	

A copy of this form should be sent to the person making the complaint, the Head of Services and Head Office.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with this response to your initial complaint you can make a Formal Complaint - Form CFI can be requested from Head Office. In the first instance, the Head of Childrens Services will review the actions already taken and the related documentation. The Head of Childrens Services will then respond within 5 working days with a written response.

## Form CF1 – Formal Complaint Form

Please use this form to record the event or problem that has caused you concern. The Head of Centre will offer you an initial response by phone or by letter (**Form CF2**) within 24 hours which will state when the full reply to your formal complaint will be given and by whom.

<b>Your name:</b>	
<b>Your contact details:complaint:</b>	

### Please give details of your complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the event / identified problem:</b>			
<b>Nature of the issue: (e.g. Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Bullying, Welfare, Behaviour)</b>			
<b>Actions you wish Wessex Lodge to take:</b>			
<b>Signed and dated:</b>			

## Form WI - Witness Statement

A complaint has been received and we understand that you may be able to help us investigate this in order for it to be resolved to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint. We need to know what happened. Please tell us what happened so that we can produce a witness statement on your behalf. We will make notes, type up your version of events in full and then ask you to sign the statement.

<b>Witness name:</b>	
<b>Recorded by:</b>	
<b>Supported by:</b>	
<b>Date, time and location of interview:</b>	

### Details of the Complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location, date and time:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			

### Witness statement:

<b>This is a true and accurate transcript of what I have said during this interview. Signature of Witness:</b>	
<b>Signature of Statement Writer:</b>	

This form should be returned to the investigator of the complaint and copy sent to Head Office

## Form CF2 - Interim Response to a Formal Complaint Received

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location, date and time:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			
<b>Person making the complaint, including contact details:</b>			

### Action to be taken:

<b>Complaint to be investigated by:</b>	
<b>Details of people interviewed:</b>	
<b>Details of witness statements to prepare:</b>	
<b>Further investigation / actions to be taken:</b>	
<b>Other professionals to notify: (e.g. Social Worker, Safeguarding - LADO, H&amp;S Officer, Police, Local Authority)</b>	
<b>A full response to be prepared by whom and by when:</b>	
<b>Signed and dated the investigating person:</b>	

A copy of this form should be sent to the person making the complaint, the Head of Centre, Director and Head Office.



## Form CF3 - Full Response to a Formal Complaint Received

In response to your formal complaint, an investigation has taken place. The incident / identified problem has been examined, actions and procedures already carried out have been checked and findings have been recorded. Further action that is needed has been identified and has been in order to resolve any outstanding issues.

### Details of the Complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location, date and time:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			
<b>Person making the complaint, including contact details:</b>			
<b>Findings</b>			
<b>Action and Outcomes</b>			
<b>Further Recommendations</b>			
<b>Name, date and signature of Managing Director:</b>			

These are the findings, outcomes and recommendations after a full investigation. If for any reason you are still dissatisfied with this response to your formal complaint you are advised to contact the Head of Centre who will review the complaint and may set up an independent Panel Hearing to hear your complaint. The outcome of an Independent Panel Hearing will be final.

Copy of this form should go to the Head of Centre, Director and Head Office.

## Form CF4 - Full Response to a Formal Complaint Received

In response to your formal complaint, an investigation has taken place. Following this investigation I now offer you my full response. The investigation carried out is detailed below, and the actions taken as described.

### Details of the Complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		<b>Location, date and time:</b>	
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			
<b>Person making the complaint, including contact details:</b>			
<b>Details of the Investigation:</b>			
<b>Action and Outcomes</b>			
<b>Further Recommendations, including details and date of Independent Panel Hearing:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>			

Copy of this form should go to the Head of Centre, Director and Head Office.

## Form CF5 - Full Independent Panel Hearing Response

Following the investigation by the Panel into your Formal Complaint, I now offer you the final response.

### Details of the Complaint:

<b>Person (s) involved:</b>		Location, date and time:	
<b>Brief description of the complaint:</b>			
<b>Person making the complaint, including contact details:</b>			

### Details of the Independent Panel Hearing:

<b>Attendees: (including contact details and professional capacities)</b>	
<b>Reports, forms, witness statements and other documentation submitted and considered:</b>	
<b>Further Recommendations, including details and date of Independent Panel Hearing:</b>	

Copy of this form should go to the Head of Centre, Director and Head Office.

**Form CF5 - Full Independent Panel Hearing Response (cont)**

**Panel Hearing Full Response:**

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**Panel Hearing Decision:**

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<b>Signature</b>	
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A copy of this form should be sent to the Head of Centre, Director, and Head Office.