

The Priory School Trust

Non-parental Complaints Policy

Monitoring	Frame of engagement	Date
Member of Staff Responsible	MJB	August 2017
Consultation Parameters		
Governor Accountability	Trust Board	
Date of latest version		August 2017
Date for next review (and cycle)		July 2020
Uploaded to Website		September 2017

1. Statement of Intent

The Executive Principal and Trustees are fully committed to the sustained improvement of our Trust and working with our community. Where concerns are raised by the wider community, or simply through the continual and thorough self-evaluation process, we will investigate these matters thoroughly. We welcome feedback from those outside the immediate school community and will always try to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible.

This policy does not automatically mean that the complainant will receive satisfaction according to the original reason for the complaint. A complaint will be addressed according to whether the school is legally obligated to act and within this whether its actions fall within its responsibility; it will consider the moral imperative to put right that which may be considered wrong, but will only act within its boundaries of formal responsibility.

The Trust will consider if its actions have been reasonable and if the request/complaint is reasonable to the extent that action should/can be taken. In considering any concern raised by a member of the local community, the school will use all reasonable options to find a solution.

At any point in time, should the conduct of the complainant be judged as unacceptable, including through vexatious conduct, or harassment, or where the complainant pursues a complaint to an excessive level, either because they have not had a satisfactory outcome (or otherwise), then the Trust reserves the right to take action to prevent any further incidence of such conduct. Reference to persistent/vexatious conduct, or harassment, is made in the Complaints policy for The Priory School (which can be found on its web-site).

An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These would include concerns such as child protection issues or bullying allegations, where the school may either involve appropriate external agencies or else conduct its own internal review to test whether there is any corroborative evidence which might trigger a formal investigation.

Records of any complaints made through this policy will be retained and reported to governors. Any concerns raised will be treated with a high degree of confidentiality and we ask the complainant does likewise. Any relevant parties will, however, be consulted to assist with any investigations being carried out.

2. Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with The Executive Principal. This may be by email, letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via The Priory School office. It is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved at this informal stage.

3. Formal Stage

If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed or it is felt that the reasons given for the decision were erroneous, or the matter refers to

the Executive Principal, then the complainant may request that the Trust Board reviews the process followed by the Trust, or receives representation from the complainant.

Again, the complaint should be in writing, be accompanied by any appropriate documentation and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. It must make clear that the complainant is invoking the Formal stage of the Complaints Procedure. This must reach the Clerk to the Trust within 10 working days of the Principal's decision and response. The Chair of the Trustees will then decide on the next steps. Options are:-

- a) To convene a meeting between themselves and the complainant
- b) To convene a panel to hear the complaint
- c) To drop the complaint

All consideration will be communicated to the complainant in writing.

Further Action: The decision of the Trust Board is final but if the complainant remains dissatisfied they have the right to register the complaint to the Education Funding Agency (EFA), or Ofsted.:-

EFA

Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2GJ, or via the Department of Education website.

OFSTED

Royal Exchange Buildings

St Ann's Square

Manchester M2 7LA 08456 404045

However, the responsibility for dealing with complaints about The Trust lies solely with the Trust itself and its trustees. The procedures of the EFA and other agencies are expected to reflect existing legislation and ensure that any complaint received by them, which does not fall to them by statute to resolve, will be redirected to the school immediately and that the complainant be informed accordingly.