

Policy for the management of complaints (R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision School)

Amended on: 12/03/2016

Review Date: 01/03/2018

Revision history:

12/03/16 - Amended

01/03/2014: - No amendments to policy.

01/03/2012: - Policy written for R.E.A.L. Independent Schools.

Principles

It is the aim of R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision School to provide an outstanding education for all our children. The Headteacher and staff work hard to build positive relationships with all School

parents. We are nonetheless obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that we follow in such cases.

If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the Headteacher immediately after school or over the phone.

Aims

R.E.A.L. Alternative Provision 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. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

The complaints procedure

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the tutor. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. Our tutors ensure that each child is happy at school and is making good progress. They naturally want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.

Where parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the tutor, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. The headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Following an unsatisfactory meeting with the Headteacher complaints must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send their written complaint to the board of directors who will arrange a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the directors and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the board of directors to include one person independent of the management and the running of the school. The school Administration Manager, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within 20 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 5 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 panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headteacher, the board of directors where appropriate and, where relevant, the person complained of.

The decision of the panel will be final but should parents still not be satisfied, they can complain directly to the Secretary of State, who will look into whether the school handled the complaint properly.

In the case of serious misconduct complaints will be referred immediately to the police.

Should any parents have a complaint about the Headteacher, they should first request an informal meeting with him/her but if parents are unhappy with the outcome or the complaint is very serious, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined above.

Written records of complaints are kept and a log indicates whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.

All 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 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

Monitoring and review

The board of directors monitors the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. The board of directors examine this log on an annual basis.

The board of directors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process and makes any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.