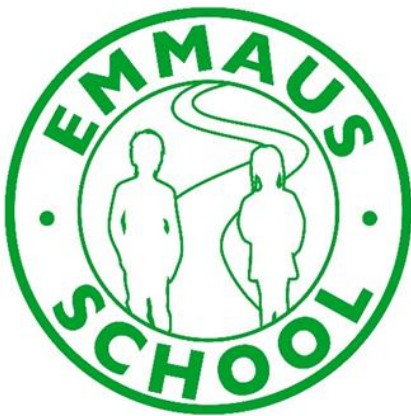


Complaints Policy



EMMAUS SCHOOL

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Introduction

This policy applies to all children, including those in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) who are on role at the school. It does not apply to prospective students or those who have left, unless the complaint was lodged during the time when the student was registered at the school. This policy is available on the school website.

"Let us, therefore, make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification."

(Romans 14:19)

Emmaus School believes that educating children is a partnership between parents and teachers, where the role of the School is to serve parents and enable them to fulfil their God-given mandate to educate their children. Good communication between home and school is essential to ensure that problems do not arise in the first place. However, living in a fallen world means that it is likely there will be times when a parent has concerns which need further action. Complaints come in various forms and can refer to many different aspects of school life. Since they can damage relationships and become the source of division within the school, even the smallest complaint should be handled sensitively.

The School expects that:

- Parents will communicate their concerns courteously and sensitively.
- Parents will have checked the facts before raising a concern, remembering that there is always more than one side to every story.
- Parents will make every effort to restore relationship as soon as possible.

Parents can expect that the School will:

- Deal with concerns promptly, courteously and sensitively.
- Make every effort to resolve parents' concerns as soon as possible.
- Seek to restore relationship as soon as possible.
- Deal with complaints in accordance with the following procedure.

Emmaus School will make every effort to deal with complaints in a timely manner and normally within the timescales that are set out in each of the following stages. A working day is defined as Monday – Friday during term time. Term dates are published on the School's website.

The Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over." Matthew 18:15

- If parents have a concern, they should first approach the class teacher and in most cases the matter will be quickly resolved to the parents' satisfaction. If this not possible, it may be necessary for the class teacher to consult the Headteacher.
- If the matter is not resolved at this stage to the parents' satisfaction, usually within 15 working days, then parents may decide to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.
- The class teacher will keep a written record of all concerns, the date on which they were received and whether the concerns were resolved informally or proceeded to Stage 2.

Stage 2 Formal Resolution

- If it has not been possible to resolve parents' concerns informally, then parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher who will, after due consideration, decide the appropriate course of action.
- In most cases the Headteacher will meet the parents, normally within 5 working days, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations.
- Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, as far as possible, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, normally within 25 working days of meeting the parents, who will be informed of this decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may decide to proceed to Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure.
- The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to

the complaint, recording whether the complaint was resolved formally or proceeded to a panel hearing.

Where the complaint concerns the Headteacher the same procedures will apply but will be managed by a Governor who is not related to the Headteacher.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents are dissatisfied with the Headteacher's decision, then parents who wish to proceed to Stage 3 should, within 5 working days of receiving the Headteacher's decision, make a written, formal complaint to the Chair of Governors, who should convene a hearing within 20 working days of receiving the written complaint.
- The Clerk to the Governors will deal with the administration of the hearing.
- The panel will consist of at least 3 people who have not been directly involved in the matters relating to the complaint, made up of a combination of the following:
 - a. One person, independent of the running of the school, who will act as chair to the hearing and preferably one other person independent of the running of the School
 - b. Members of the School's Governing Body.
- Parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, friend or another independent person. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- All involved must be given at least 5 working days notification of the hearing.
- It may be necessary for the panel to carry out further investigations.
- The panel should reach a decision within 10 working days of the hearing.

The panel can:

1. Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
2. Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
3. Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
4. Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The school will keep written records of each complaint on the premises for the Headteacher

and Proprietors to view. The written records will include the recommendations and action taken by the School as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether or not the complaint was upheld. The school will also provide copies of the findings, recommendations and actions taken to the complainant and the person complained against.

The school will summarise the total number of complaints made in the previous school year, including details of how many were resolved at the formal stage (stage 2 below) and how many of these proceeded to a panel hearing (stage 3 below).

All records of complaints with associated correspondence and paperwork and will be kept for a minimum of 7 years and will be confidential except for the requirement in paragraph 6(2)(i) 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.

Complaints concerning safeguarding

Records concerning allegations of abuse must be preserved for the term of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.

Summary of Timescales

Stage 1

Acknowledge complaint within 2 working days

Achieve resolution within 15 working days

Stage 2

Headteacher meet parents within 5 working days

Headteacher's decision within 25 days of meeting with parents

Stage 3

Parents who proceed to Stage 3 should do so within 5 working days of receiving the Headteacher's decision in Stage 2

Governors convene panel within 20 working days of receiving written complaint

At least 5 working days notification of panel hearing should be given to all involved

Panel should reach a decision within 10 working days of hearing.

Complaints in the EYFS

Complaints in the EYFS include the following procedure, specifically:

- A record of complaints is retained for at least seven years.
- Parents who believe the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements are welcome to contact ISI, address below. Please note that Emmaus School has opted out of the teaching and learning requirements of EYFS.
- Complainants will be notified of the outcome of a complaint or an investigation within 28 working days of the school having received the written complaint.
- The school will provide Ofsted and ISI with a written record, on request, of all complaints made during a specific period, the recommendations made and the action taken as a result of each complaint.

As soon as the school has been notified about an inspection, all parents, including EYFS, will be informed. Once the final inspection report has been provided, it will be supplied to all parents, including EYFS.

Contact details for ISI and Ofsted

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House

9-12 Long Lane

London EC1A 9HA.

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Phone: 020 7600 0100

Website: www.isi.net

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD.

email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>