

## **Lancaster Steiner School Complaints Policy**

We try to deal with all concerns quickly and effectively. If you are not satisfied with the way the concern has been dealt with, the four stages summarised below tell you what steps you can take.

### **Stage 1. Initial contact with the school**

- At Lancaster Steiner School we aim to deal with all concerns and complaints in a positive and supportive manner.
- Many concerns will be dealt with informally when you first make them known to the school. In most cases we would expect the class teacher/administrator to be the first point of contact, either by telephone or in person.
- If the parent/guardian wish to meet with the teacher we respectfully ask them to make an appointment to discuss the situation. This ensures that:
  1. We allocate sufficient time to listen carefully to your complaint
  2. Lessons can start on time and are uninterrupted.
- If for any reason the teacher is unable to meet with the parent, he/she will either
  1. Arrange an alternative appointment
  2. Ask another teacher to informally meet with the parent/guardian
- If possible we prefer all concerns/complaints to be dealt with as quickly as possible and to everyone's satisfaction. It is preferable for concerns to be handled without the need for formal procedures. We pride ourselves on honest and genuine relationships with children, parents and members of our wider school community.
- However, we do appreciate that there may be times when more formal procedures are required and we will treat all complaints with respect and with good manners. In most cases we hope that the teacher/administrator will be the first contact and we will endeavour to resolve as soon as is possible.
- All complaints will be investigated with respect and integrity. Occasionally these discussions do not resolve your concern, and if you are still dissatisfied your next step is to make a formal complaint.

### **Stage 2. Formal consideration of your complaint**

- You should put your complaint in writing to the College of Teachers and you will receive a written acknowledgement. A complaints form can be obtained from the office.
- You may be invited to the teachers' meeting to discuss your complaint. If you wish you may bring someone with you to this meeting.
- The chair of College, another teacher or the administrator will carry out a full investigation.
- The Chair of College or other nominated member of staff will keep records of all meetings and phone conversations plus other related documents.
- Once all the relevant facts are established you will be sent a written response to the complaint. This will contain a full explanation for the decision taken and the reason for it. If follow-up action is needed, the school will tell you what it is proposing to do.
- If your complaint has gone through these two stages and you are still not happy with the outcome, the next stage is to make a formal complaint to the School Council.

### **Stage 3. Consideration by the School Council**

- You will need to contact the Chair of Council by letter, enclosing a copy of your written complaint, indicating which matters remain unresolved. New complaints should not be included. Letters should be sent to the school office.
- The Chair of Council can agree to a complaint/review panel if s/he feels it would help. The aim of this panel is to try to resolve that complaint. However, it may sometimes only be possible to establish facts and make recommendations. This should reassure you that the complaint has been taken seriously.
- Should the Chair of Council decide to hold a complaints review meeting you will be informed of the date, time and; place of the meeting by letter. The letter will also tell you what will happen at the meeting and explain that you can bring someone with you. Any member of staff directly involved in the complaint will also be invited to attend the meeting.
- Generally, no new evidence or witnesses should be introduced at this time by any of the participants.
- The meeting will be conducted in an informal manner but will ensure that everyone can put their case without interruption.
- The secretary of the Council will send you a written statement outlining the decision of the panel within two weeks.

### **Stage 4. Complaints to Ofsted**

- The panel's decision will usually be final. However, if you are still dissatisfied you may contact Ofsted.

#### **Ofsted details:**

Helpdesk, which is open from 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday. Phone No. 08456 404045 or

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