



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO MILLFIELD, MILLFIELD PREP SCHOOL AND MILLFIELD PRE-PREP SCHOOL (INCLUDING EYFS), TOGETHER REFERRED TO IN THIS POLICY AS "MILLFIELD"

Millfield is committed to providing a high quality of education and care for our pupils and we want to listen and respond to the views of parents.

We want to ensure that any problems are easily resolved and that we respond promptly and appropriately to all complaints. There are three stages to this procedure and we will take your complaint seriously at each stage. The procedure applies to parents of all pupils currently at the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS"), parents of prospective pupils and parents of pupils who have left the school, providing that the complaint was made prior to the pupil's departure.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

In accordance with paragraph 32 (1)(b) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, Millfield will make available (via request to the Head's PA) to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State, or the ISI, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, may raise in good faith.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days (i.e. Monday to Friday during term time). It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible; the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 20 working days. However, where a complaint relates to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, the school must investigate the complaint and notify complainants of the outcome within 20 working days of having received a written complaint.

If a complaint proceeds to Stage 3, the Formal and Independent Review, the school will aim to complete this within a further 20 working days.

Recording Complaints

The school will keep a written record of all formal complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing; and the action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

If you have a concern or complaint it is hoped that, in the first instance, you will contact the Group Tutor, Houseparent or Head of Department concerned. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway.

Where the Group Tutor, Houseparent or Head of Department cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary to consult a more senior member of staff. The Head may be involved at the Informal stage, either at your request or by referral from a Senior Staff Member.

A written and dated record will be kept of all concerns and complaints.

If the matter cannot be settled to your satisfaction within 10 working days you are advised to move to the procedure outlined in Stage 2 below.

If the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution by the Head

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally you should write to the Head to request that he/she formally investigate under Stage 2 of this procedure, and the Head will acknowledge that he/she is dealing with it as such. You should provide him/her with information explaining the specific nature of your complaint. The Head will consider the matter and decide the appropriate course of action to take.

It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.

The Head may speak to you (normally within 4 working days) to discuss the matter and if possible reach a resolution. If it is not possible to give you a full reply within this time - for instance because a detailed investigation is required - you will be told what is being done to deal with your complaint. The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head is, as far as is practicable, satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be informed. The Head will give reasons for his/her decision.

If, following the Head's response you are still not satisfied, you may wish to move to stage 3 of this procedure.

If the complaint is against the Head, the Chair of Governors (or a Governor nominated by the Chair) will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Chair or nominated Governor may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and may speak to or meet with parents

to discuss the matter further. Once they are satisfied that, so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, the parent will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair or nominated Governor will provide reasons for the decision. If, following the response, you are still not satisfied, you may wish to move to stage 3 or this procedure.

Stage 3 - Formal and Independent Review

Request for Review

If you wish to invoke Stage 3 you should write to the Clerk to the Governors within 10 working days of receipt of the Head's response (or longer by agreement) to request a Formal and Independent Review.

In the application you must state the grounds on which you are asking for a review and the outcome which you seek, the matter will then be referred to the Review Panel for consideration.

Review Panel ("the Panel")

The Panel will consist of two Governors and one member who is independent of the management and running of the school. The panel members will have no detailed prior knowledge of the case or of the pupil or parents and will not normally include the Chairman of Governors. The Clerk to the Governors will select the members of the Review Panel. Parents will be notified in advance of the names of the Panel members and fair consideration will be given to any objection to a particular member of the Panel.

Review Meeting

The meeting will take place at the school, normally between 3 and 10 working days after the parent's application has been received. A Review will not normally take place during school holidays. A Review Meeting is a private procedure and all those who are concerned in it are required to keep its proceedings confidential.

Those present at the Review Meeting will normally be:

- Members of the Review Panel and the Clerk to the Governors.
- The Head and any relevant member of staff whom the Head considers should attend in order to secure a fair outcome.
- The pupil together with his/her parents and, if they wish, any members of the school staff who agree to attend. A friend or relation may accompany the parents and legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The Clerk to the Governors must be given 7 working days' notice if the friend or relation is legally qualified.

The meeting will be chaired by one member of the Review Panel and will be conducted in an informal manner. The Clerk will keep a hand-written minute of the main points which arise at the meeting. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners. The Chair may at his/her discretion adjourn or terminate the meeting.

The Panel will consider the complaint(s) raised and if possible resolve it immediately without the need for further investigation. If further investigation is required the Panel will decide how it will be carried out.

After consideration of all the relevant facts, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. The Panel will write to inform you of its decision, and the reasons for it, within 10

working days (or longer by agreement) of the hearing. The Head, the Full Governing Body and (where relevant) the person complained of, will receive copies of this letter as well as any recommendations. The letter will be retained in School for inspection by these parties. The decision of the Panel will be final.

EYFS

Millfield will provide Ofsted and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate ("ISI"), on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years. Parents have the right to complain directly to Ofsted and ISI if they believe that the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements. Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 1231 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net. If the School is inspected by Ofsted or ISI, the School will notify parents and/or carers and supply a copy of the inspection report to parents and/or carers of children attending the School on a regular basis.

Policy owner	Mark Suddaby
Reviewed on	January 2019
Review by date	January 2020
Approved by Governor Committee	Audit
Approved on	March 2019
Approve by date	February 2022
Publication	Website, Parent Portal, Xtranet

Request for a Formal and Independent Review of the Head's Response to a Complaint

To: The Clerk to the Governors, Millfield Schools, Street, Somerset BA16 0YD (Telephone 01458 444596)

Name of Pupil:

WE REQUEST that a sub-committee ("Panel") of the Board of Governors carries out a formal and independent review ("Review") of the Head's response to a complaint. We agree that the Review will be carried out in accordance with Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure supplied to us and we agree to abide by the terms of that Procedure and in particular that the proceedings, all correspondence, statements and records relating to the complaint 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) and that the decision of the Panel will be final, subject to such (if any) legal rights as may exist.

WE CONFIRM that we are persons with parental responsibility for the above named pupil and that we have consulted the pupil who wishes the Review to be undertaken.

WE UNDERSTAND that the Panel will be concerned with the fairness and proportionality of the Head's decision in accordance with the school's existing policies (where applicable and relevant) on educational, pastoral care and administration matters.

WE UNDERSTAND that we may be accompanied at the Review Meeting by a friend or relation who is not legally qualified and that we may ask members of the School staff to attend the meeting if they are willing to do so.

THE GROUNDS upon which we seek a Review and the matters which we wish to discuss at the Review and to ask the Panel to take into account are as set out in a statement attached to this sheet.

THE OUTCOME which we seek from this review is set out in the statement attached to this sheet.

(Two signatures required where practicable)

First Signature **Second Signature**

Full Name **Full Name**

Relationship to Pupil **Relationship to Pupil**

Address: **Address:**

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Telephone Numbers **Telephone Numbers**

Daytime: **Daytime:**

Evening: **Evening:**

Date **Date**