

# Concerns and Complaints Policy

## Introduction

Pace aims to provide a safe, secure and caring environment in which all children are valued and respected and where they can receive a high quality educational provision which meets their needs. However, Pace recognises that circumstances may arise when stakeholders including parents and other users of Pace may wish to raise a matter of concern or make a complaint, and concerns are considered very seriously.

## Procedures

Pace's complaints procedures aim to:

- Encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible.
- Be easily accessible and publicised.
- Be simple to use and understand.
- Be impartial.
- Be non-adversarial.
- Allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress.
- Ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary.
- Respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation).
- Address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary.
- Provide information to the Pace's senior management team so that services can be improved.

## Outcomes of Complaints

There are a number of different outcomes possible as a result of a complaint and an investigation:

- No basis for complaint.
- Apology to complainant for misunderstanding – the school may consider changing systems.
- Apology to complainant for incident – staff rebuked.
- Apology to complainant – staff member disciplined.
- Apology to complainant – monitoring of staff performance, informal competence procedure.

### Stage One

- In the first instance, parents should discuss any day-to-day matters with the Team Leader. The Team Leader is responsible for ensuring that the concern or complaint is dealt with appropriately and that the parent or carer feels that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved. The Team Leader will endeavour to resolve the concern or complaint within one working day.
- If you are unhappy with the result of this procedure, or your concern relates to issues other than day-to-day ones, you may refer to the Heads of School Services who will respond within one working day.

### Stage Two

- If parents or other stakeholders remain unsatisfied with the outcome, they should speak or write to the Head Teacher or in the absence of the Head Teacher, the Chief Executive, who will respond within two working days.

### Stage Three

- If the matter remains unresolved, parents may make a formal complaint by writing to the Chairman of Trustees of the PACE Centre, at:

Coventon Road

Aylesbury

Buckinghamshire

HP19 9JL

(using the complaints form in Appendix One.)

- Parents will receive acknowledgement of their complaint form within 5 working days and the outcome of the investigation will be sent to them in writing within 15 days of receiving the complaint.
- If parents and other users of Pace are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint to the Chair of Trustees, Pace will make arrangements to have their complaint heard before a panel of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. This panel will include persons not involved in the management of PACE. The panel **may** include the CEO/a Trustee/Chair of Trustees/Patron/HR professional/Local Authority officer, as appropriate.
- Parents may attend the panel hearing and may be accompanied by a supporter. The panel will be required to make findings and recommendations, and copies of these will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant, trustees of PACE, Head Teacher and Chief Executive, and where relevant, the person complained about.
- Written records of all complaints and resulting action will be kept and may be shared with OFSTED at their request. Parents and other interested parties will be provided with information about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding year on request. Correspondence, Statements and Records of Complaints will be kept confidential.

If at any stage during a complaint procedure you have a very serious concern, you can approach statutory agencies such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board, ([www.bucks-lscb.org.uk](http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk)), Children with Disabilities Team or Education Authorities.

You may also contact OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) in their regulatory role. OFSTED's address is:

Ofsted  
 Piccadilly Gate  
 Store Street  
 Manchester  
 M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

It is essential for the development of your child that he/she feels you have confidence in his/her school and his/her teachers. If from time to time there are things of which you are critical please do not air your criticism in front of your child.

- Children will be given the opportunity at their termly House Meetings to suggest improvements and developments, including complaints. Children's views are also sought at their Annual Review meeting.
- A separate Grievance Procedure is in place for staff.

*We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.*

*This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.*

**Date: October 2021**

**Review Date: October 2022**

**To be reviewed by: Head Teacher**

**Appendices:**

- 1. Complaints Form**
- 2. At the Panel Hearing**

## Appendix One – Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Chair of Trustees, via the school, who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give concise details of your complaint, including dates, names of witnesses etc, to allow the matter to be fully investigated.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (Who did you speak to/write to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use:

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:



## Appendix Two - At the panel hearing

- After introductions, the complainant will be invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses (if any).
- The CEO/Chair of Trustees may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The CEO/Chair of Trustees is then invited to explain Pace's actions and be followed by Pace's witnesses (if any).
- The complainant may question both the CEO/Chair of Trustees and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The CEO/Chair of Trustees is then invited to sum up Pace's actions and response to the complaint.
- The Chairman of the panel explains that both parties will hear from the panel within five working days.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The clerk remains to support the panel.