

# **Handling Complaints Policy**

**GREEK PRIMARY SCHOOL OF LONDON**

**Issue 1: 30/11/2020**

**Reviewed Annually**

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**Approved by: Despoina Kyriakidou**

**Approved by: Greek School Proprietor**

**To be reviewed: 30/11/ 2021**

The Greek Primary School of London is funded by and belongs to Greek Ministry of Education, Responsible for its function is the Educational Office in the Greek Embassy of London ( 1A Holland Park, W11 3TP, London, Tel 0207 2210093)

The Educational Counsellor is Mrs Tsiligianni Vassiliki.

The aim of the Handling Complaints Policy is to inform parents and carers of the Greek Primary School, the procedure they should follow in case they have a complaint.

Parents who have concerns or complaints can make those in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or the Headteacher.

The school will generally respond within 15 school days.

Should the concern be of sufficient seriousness or be unlikely to be resolved informally, they make an appointment to see the Headteacher.

Usually we resolve most concerns informally but if the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint (Appendix 1).

This written-formal complaint will be sent to the Educational Office, as soon as possible.

Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to Mrs V. Tsiligianni, the Educational Counsellor via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to Despoina Kyriakidou (Headteacher) via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form (Appendix 1) is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like Citizens Advice to help you.

### **Anonymous complaints**

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

### **Time scales**

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

### **Stage 1**

Formal complaints must be made to the Headteacher (unless they are about the Headteacher), via the school office. This may be done in person, in writing (preferably on the Complaint Form), or by telephone. The Headteacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 3 school days.

If the complaint is about the Headteacher, or the Educational Counsellor, a suitably skilled person will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1. Complaints about the Headteacher must be made to the Educational office, via the school office.

## Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2 – a meeting with members of a three-member panel, which will be formed of three, impartial persons. The complaints panel/committee will consist of at least three members with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint.

- the educational counsellor, Mrs Vassiliki Tsilogianni
- the head of the Greek Secondary School (Mr Periklis Akrivos)
- experienced teacher

This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

The Educational office will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within twenty school days of receipt of the Stage 2 request.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Panel will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee.

At least eight school days before the meeting, the Educational Office will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least five school days before the meeting. Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least five school days before the date of the meeting.

The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded. The committee will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure. The meeting will be held in private. If necessary, the parent can request a relative to be present as a translator. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken. The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented.

The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future. The Chair of the Committee will provide the complainant and the Greek Primary School with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within fifteen school days. The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact

the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by the Greek Primary School.

### **Next Steps**

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2. The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by the Greek Primary School. They will consider whether the Greek Primary School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint. The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education

- online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus),
- by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or

Department for Education  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD.

This policy was updated on the 30th of November 2020

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **PART A - RECORD OF COMPLAINT**

Complainant's Name: Address: Telephone: Details of the Complaint: Date Complaint Made: Action Already Taken to Resolve the Matter: Complainant's View of what might resolve the issue:

### **PART B - ACTION TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Complaint Investigated By: Action (with dates): Date of formal meeting with complainant: Outcome of the Meeting:

#### **ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**

- Welcome, introductions and explanation of proceedings by the Chair;
- The Complainant (or representative) is invited to explain the complaint;
- The Headteacher (or representative) may question the Complainant;
- The Panel may ask questions at any time;
- If there are any witnesses for the Complainant they are invited individually into the room to make their points, the Headteacher and the Panel may question them and then the witness is invited to leave;
- The Headteacher is invited to explain the schools actions;
- The Complainant and the Panel may ask questions;
- Any witnesses for the school are invited in and treated in the same way as the Complainant's witnesses;
- The Chair checks that all parties have asked all they need to, then the Complainant, followed by the headteacher is invited to sum up;
- The Chair explains that the decision will be issued within 3 school days and all parties leave together;
- The Panel makes its decision.