



Fable House Complaints Policy

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Policy Statement:

This policy sets out the procedure for handling complaints at Fable House. We are committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for all our students and maintaining open communication with parents. We recognize that complaints may arise from time to time, and we are dedicated to resolving them in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

Scope:

This policy applies to all stakeholders, including parents, students, staff members, and any other individuals associated with Fable House.

Policy Guidelines:

Definition of a Complaint:

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or concern related to Fable House operations, policies, procedures, staff, or any other aspect of the provision.

Introduction

Fable House is clear about the difference between a concern and a complaint. Fable House takes informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage. These key messages deal with complaints but the underlying principle is that concerns ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. The requirement to have a complaints procedure need not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally.

An effective complaints procedure will:

- Encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- Be easily accessible and publicised;
- Be simple to understand and use;
- 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;
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- Provide information to the Provisions leadership team so that practice can be improved.

Informal complaints

A parent/carers can make a complaint to any of the following Lead tutor/ Office Manager / Head teacher. Attempts at resolution can be considered through mediation, which could include advice, information, discussion. Fable House take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter quickly.

Formal complaints

Where a parent feels that they have exhausted the options above, and the problem has not been resolved to their satisfaction or the complaint that is made should clearly be dealt with formally then this will always be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and DSL. Details of the complaint will be communicated to parents/carers and the student's LA and his/her Social Worker (where appropriate). The nature of the complaint will be recorded on a complaint form and will be kept on file. The DSL/Headteacher or SLT will determine how the complaint will be handled to the satisfaction of the complainant and his/her parents/carers.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the initial formal complaint, the complainant can request that the complaint be reviewed by the oversight Board. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not involve a reinvestigation of the complaint, but a review of the initial Formal complaint made to the Senior Leadership team. In the instance that the complaint is handed over to oversight board a panel hearing may take place. The parent/carer can attend and be accompanied at the hearing if they wish to do so. The hearing will allow for the panel to stipulate and make recommendations in regard to the complaints handling. A secure electronic copy of all findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant, where relevant, the person complained about and stored securely on file.

Complaints Panel

The Complaints Panel is convened to ensure a fair, impartial, and thorough review of complaints in Fable House. The panel is a minimum of 3 members and is typically composed of the following members:

Chair of the Panel: A member of the governing board or a senior leader who has not been involved in the complaint or the events leading to it. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the panel operates smoothly, maintains impartiality, and adheres to the established procedures.

Oversight board members: One or more oversight board members who have no prior involvement in the complaint or the circumstances surrounding it. The governors provide an independent perspective, ensuring a balanced review of the situation.

Independent Member: The school will include an independent member who is not connected to the school. These individuals serve to guarantee the objectivity and fairness of

the complaint review process. The complainant can also request an independent member be there with them throughout the hearing.

Investigating complaints

It is suggested that at each stage, the person investigating makes sure that they:

- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- Meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- Conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- Keep notes of the interview or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting (if necessary)

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure Fable House will keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or in part. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology
- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review policies in light of the complaint.

Time Limits

Complaints need to be considered and resolved, as quickly, and efficiently as possible, most informal complaints should be resolved within 5 working days. If Investigation is required Fable house should complete most investigations within 20 school days but, if a complaint goes through all the stages listed above, it may take several months to resolve.

When investigating a complaint, we will try to clarify:

- What has happened
- Who was involved
- What the complainant feels would be a desired outcome

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident. We will consider exceptions to this timeframe in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period. Where a complaint is received in term time with a school holiday break during the investigation period, the investigation will be postponed during the break and will commence on the first school day back. See data protection policy for information relating to subject access requests.

If, at any point, we cannot meet the timescales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay
- Review the timescales with HR support

Child Protection Referral

If the complaint is of alleged abuse, then a referral will be made to the LA as set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Allegations of Abuse Policy.

Monitoring and review

The oversight board monitor the complaints procedure in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs a hard copy of all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. The oversight board will examine this log on an annual basis. The oversight board take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents/carers so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

This policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, every year.

Confidentiality

All complaints made to fable house are highly confidential along with correspondence, statements and records connecting to them. The only instance where this information will be shared is where the secretary of state or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 act requests access to them