



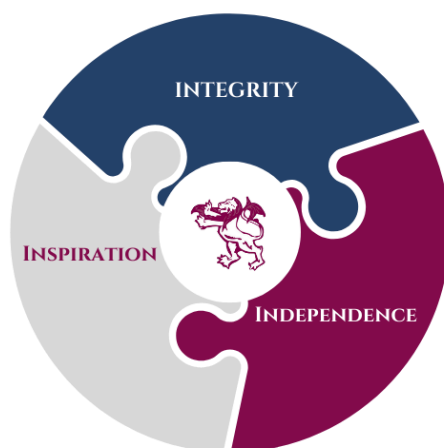
## **Complaints Policy**

for the whole School including EYFS

Policy reviewed by	Headmaster
Date Reviewed on	20th February 2025
SLT Review Period	Annual
Next SLT Review Date Due	February 2026
Governor Review Period	Annual
Governing Committee	FGB
Approved by Governors On	March 2025
Next Governor Review Due	March 2026

# OUR MISSION

## WELCOME TO THE PRIDE!



Edge Grove is a leading UK prep school for boys and girls aged 3-13. Whatever their unique heritage and identities, all pupils develop **Integrity**, **Independence** and **Inspiration**.

### INTEGRITY

Pupils feel healthy, safe, happy and proud to belong and be a unique part of the Edge Grove community. They enjoy friendship and fun, promote kindness, living and growing in alignment with the following self-elected 16 core Values:

- |                  |                   |               |               |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Confidence    | 5. Unity          | 9. Creativity | 13. Kindness  |
| 2. Passion       | 6. Responsibility | 10. Integrity | 14. Respect   |
| 3. Determination | 7. Risk-Taking    | 11. Trust     | 15. Humility  |
| 4. Diversity     | 8. Sportsmanship  | 12. Empathy   | 16. Tolerance |

### INDEPENDENCE

Pupils develop, through child-centred active learning, intellectual, physical and spiritual confidence and independence, self-motivation and agency across a broad range of academic, co-curricular and pastoral activities and experiences. They ask and answer questions, develop curiosity, a Growth Mindset, passion and entrepreneurship.

### INSPIRATION

Pupils hone the following transferable, lifelong World Economic Forum skills for future success and personal fulfilment:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Analytical thinking and innovation            | 6. Creativity, originality, and initiative  |
| 2. Active learning and learning strategies       | 7. Leadership and social influence          |
| 3. Complex problem-solving                       | 8. Reasoning, problem-solving, and ideation |
| 4. Critical thinking and analysis                | 9. Emotional intelligence                   |
| 5. Resilience, stress tolerance, and flexibility | 10. Technology design and programming       |

# **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

## **From February 2025 onwards**

### **Scope**

This policy applies equally to the parents of all pupils at the School, regardless of age and is reviewed, authorised and approved annually by the Head and Bursar on behalf of the Full Governing Board and updated as needed on an interim basis by the Bursar.

Whilst the policy is available to the parents of current pupils, the policy may, solely at the School's discretion, also be applicable to the parents of pupils who have left the School where the complaint has been received prior to the pupil leaving the School.

This policy is also available, at Stage 3 only, under circumstances where parents may wish to appeal against a decision to permanently exclude a pupil from the School.

This policy is not available to the parents of prospective pupils or pupils who have, at the time, not yet joined the School.

No complaint may be brought under the Policy in relation to the non-payment of any sum(s) owing to the School. If a parent has a complaint regarding any action taken (or proposed to be taken) by the School as a result of his/her failure to pay any sum(s) owing to the School the parent may write to the Clerk to the Governors at the School who will refer the matter to the Chair of the Governors.

Similarly, if a parent wishes to make a complaint, their attention will be drawn to the School's Terms & Conditions under which a place is accepted; the making of a complaint does not remove the obligation to settle fees due and payable under those terms and conditions.

### **Related Policies & Documents**

- School Mission and Values;
- Child Protection Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Pupil Behaviour Policy;
- Pupil Anti-Bullying Policy;
- School Terms and Conditions of Entry, as updated;
- The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015;
- The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

### **Introduction**

Edge Grove prides itself on the quality of the teaching, co-curricular activity and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, there may be occasions when parents are unhappy about some aspect of School life. We believe that parents should feel comfortable in expressing any reasonable concern and that the School will respond in a positive, non-defensive manner.

### **Publication**

Edge Grove makes available to parents of all pupils details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding School year. This is either available on the school's website or upon request to the school.

This element of the policy is in accordance with paragraph 33(k) of Part 7, Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (published in January 2015).

The School will also provide details provided, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the ISI for the purposes of section 162A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (as subsequently amended).

## **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. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the School has done something wrong, or failed to do something that it should have done or acted unfairly. 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 raise in good faith.

## **Making a Complaint**

Should a parent wish to make a complaint, they can expect it to be taken seriously by the School in accordance with this policy and procedure.

## **Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints**

The School will acknowledge a complaint within five working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. 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 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. The School will complete Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing within a further 28 days if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

## **Recording Complaints**

Following resolution of a complaint, the School will keep a written record of all complaints and at which stage they may be resolved and any action taken as a result of the complaint. At the School's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised;
- Name of parent;
- Name of pupil;
- Description of the issue;
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate);
- Witness statements (if appropriate);
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage;
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations).

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required under paragraph 33(k) of Part 7, Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

## **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution - Parents' first point of contact is their child's Form Teacher**

- If parents have a concern they contact their child's Form Teacher, who in the vast majority of cases will resolve the matter straight away to the parents' satisfaction before it becomes any more serious;
- If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult the Assistant Head, Junior or Assistant Head Middle. For complaints concerning pupils in the Senior Department, Form Teachers may consult the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Deputy Head (Academic);
- The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints, including the date on which they were received and the action taken as a result of the complaint;
- The Form Teacher will copy this written record to the Head to save onto the Complaints Drive.

Should the matter not be resolved within 14 days or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure, within 14 days of receiving the decision of Stage 1 of this Procedure under this Complaints Policy.

If, however, the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors, who can be contacted in confidence via [clerk@edgegrove.com](mailto:clerk@edgegrove.com) within 14 days of receiving the decision of Stage 1 of this Procedure under this Complaints Policy.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

If the complaint cannot be resolved under Stage 1, parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team to resolve the complaint.

- The Senior Leadership team member will meet the parents concerned to discuss the matter as soon as possible and within 14 days during School term-time and, during School holidays, within 28 days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage;
- The Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Deputy Head (Academic) will investigate all complaints about the fulfilment of EYFS requirements in conjunction with the Assistant Head, Junior and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days;
- The record of any such complaints investigated under Stage 2 will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request;
- It may be necessary for the Senior Leadership Team member to carry out further investigations and, in such cases the parents will be informed of this process with a date agreed for follow up action and meetings;
- The Senior Leadership Team member will keep a written record of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint as well as a note of any resolution at this stage;
- Once the Senior Leadership Team member is satisfied that, in so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his decision;
- If the complaint is against the Head, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Chair may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will, in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair will give reasons for his/her decision;
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to the more formal Stage 3 of this Procedure within 14 days of receiving the decision of Stage 2 of this Procedure under this Complaints Policy.

## **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following failure to reach an earlier resolution at Stage 2), the Head will refer them to the Chair of Governors, or in his/her absence or in the case of a complaint against the Head in which the Chair has already been involved at Stage 2, the

Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints' Panel;

- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints' Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Chair of the Governors (or, in cases where the Chair has been involved in Stage 2, the Clerk to the Governors), on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable within 14 days of the referral. This time frame may not necessarily be achievable during School holiday periods.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing to all parties not later than seven days prior to the hearing;
- The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person should they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate;
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the further need for investigation;
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out;
- After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 14 days of the Hearing;
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 14 days of the hearing.
- The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint had been lodged as well as to the Head and Board of Governors; a file copy of the decision will be available for inspection on the School premises by the Board of Governors and the Head. The Head will ensure that a copy of the Panel's findings is maintained along with the files referred to under stages 1 & 2 together with the details of any action taken.

The same procedure detailed in Stage 3 above will also form the appeals process for parents wishing to appeal against an exclusion decision taken by the School.

For further details see the Pupil Behaviour Policy, available on the School's website or on request from the School Office.

### **Record Keeping**

The School maintains records of all complaints made under this policy and any subsequent actions taken and the number of complaints dealt with under this policy in the preceding School year is advised to parents through updates to this policy which is also available from the School Office at any time.

### **Complaints in Past Years**

There were two complaints investigated and resolved under Stage 2 and three under Stage 1 of this policy in the School year 2023/2024.

### **External Agencies**

Parents may, at any stage of the complaint procedure, feel free to contact the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) on 020 7600 0100 or by email at [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

Parents of pupils in the EYFS setting, who believe the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements, may contact either ISI as above or directly to Ofsted via email to [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0300 123 4666.

Edge Grove School will provide ISI (and Ofsted for EYFS), 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 formal complaints will be kept for at least 5 years.

### **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)**

ADR applies to all contracts for services and the School's contracts with parents therefore fall within its scope.

ADR takes effect when the School's internal complaint-handling procedures detailed above in Stages 1 – 3, is exhausted without resolution of the matter. In this unlikely eventuality, the School is required to provide parents in writing with the following:

- An appropriate statement to the effect that the School is unable to settle the parental complaint; and
- The name and website address of an ADR provider that could deal with the complaint, if the parent wishes to use ADR. The School is not required to submit to an ADR procedure.

**END**

**Richard Stanley**  
**Headmaster**  
**February 2025**