



Ashbridge

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL & NURSERY

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Approved by: SMT

Approved date: January 2022

To be reviewed by: SMT

Review date: January 2023

Availability: On the school website and as a paper copy on request

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery, Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm, The Fledglings Nursery

Linked to: Pupil Complaints, Terms and Conditions

Introduction

It is our policy to welcome discussion on any aspect of the service and education we offer and it is our firm belief that good customer relationships depend on honest and direct communication between all parties. As such, we strongly encourage parents/guardians to follow the stages of the complaints procedure. We ensure that complaints are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits. The raising of concerns and complaints is viewed very positively by all staff at Ashbridge as a means of improving our service. This policy may be used by any parent/guardian who has a complaint about any aspect of the school or our nurseries.

Stages of Complaints

A staged approach is in place and each of the stages will usually occur in order. There will usually be no return to previous stages.

Stage 1 - Informal Stage – If a parent/guardian has a complaint, the matter may initially be discussed with the relevant member of our team. This may be the class teacher, child’s key person, Room Leader or member of the Nursery or School Management Team who will endeavour to resolve the situation to their satisfaction within **five** working days.

Stage 2 – Formal Stage - If a parent/guardian makes it clear they are not satisfied at this stage, the matter will be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team; the Headteacher, Director of Quality, Director of Operations, Director of Quality of Care, Director of Compliance, Director of Human Resources and Nursery Operations or Nursery Manager as appropriate, who will do everything possible to bring the situation to a swift and satisfactory conclusion. At this stage, the complaint becomes formal and must be put in writing; either by letter or email. Acknowledgment of a written complaint will be provided to parents/guardians in writing within **one** working day. An investigation will be carried out and parents/guardians informed of the outcome within **twenty-eight** days of the initial complaint being received. Following the investigation, the parents/guardians will be asked to confirm if they are satisfied with the resolution of the complaint.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing - If either party remain dissatisfied following stage 2 of the complaint procedure, the complaint will be referred to the Company Directors of Ashbridge School Ltd. The complainant must indicate a wish to continue with their complaint to stage 3. The complaint will then be heard by a panel appointed by the Directors and a final decision provided to parents/guardian within **twenty-eight** working days of the appeal meeting being requested.

The panel is made up of 3 people who are not directly involved in matters detailed in the complaint, normally the Company Director, an additional member of the Senior Leadership Team and another person who is independent to the management and running of the school and nurseries. The complainant will be invited to attend a panel hearing of the complaint and is welcome to bring someone to accompany them, but may not bring legal representation unless otherwise agreed. Should the parents/guardian request a panel hearing but choose not to attend, the meeting will still go ahead. The decision of the panel is final and if, after a ‘period of consideration’ by all parties an issue remains unresolved, the company in line with enrolment regulations, reserve the right to give notice, withdraw the place and terminate the contract.

Persistent Complaints

If a parent/guardian makes repeated attempts to raise the same or extremely similar complaints after it has been considered at all three stages, this is likely to be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of the policy.

Records

Written records are kept of all complaints reaching Stage 2 in the process and kept in line with our Privacy Notice and Retention of Records policy. These records will detail the stage at which the complaint was resolved and any action taken by the company as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they were upheld or not.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are logged and kept confidentially in line with GDPR, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act for independent schools or OFSTED requests access to them. All records of complaints and the findings and recommendations are available on the premises at all times for inspection by the proprietor and the Headteacher.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Ashbridge Independent School (including Ashbridge Nursery Hutton, and Ashbridge on Ribble) will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

Inspection Bodies and Contact Details

We hope that families feel able to direct complaints to the school and nursery in the first instance to give us the opportunity to investigate and address the complaint. However, a complainant may contact either of our inspection bodies for any reason relating to complaints, including if they feel we are not meeting the EYFS requirements. Inspection bodies should in the first instance, advise parents/guardians to follow the school and nursery complaints policy.

Independent Schools Inspectorate
Cap House
9-12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA
info@isi.net

OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery
DFE Number 888/6027
OFSTED Early Years Registration Number: EY286886
Main inspectorate: Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

Ashbridge on Ribble
OFSTED Early Years Registration Number: EY478907
Main inspectorate: Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)

Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm
OFSTED Early Years Registration Number: EY550926
Inspectorate: OFSTED

The Fledglings Nursery
OFSTED Early Years Registration Number: EY275113
Inspectorate: OFSTED