



**Ashbridge**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL & NURSERIES

# **ISI SETTINGS** **COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Approved by: SLT

Approved date: December 2023

To be reviewed by: SLT

Review date: December 2024

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

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School, Ashbridge  
Nursery Hutton, Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery

Linked to: Pupil Complaints, Terms and Conditions

## **Introduction**

We are always striving to provide the highest quality education for children, and we therefore welcome discussion on any aspect of the service we offer from parents/carers. Whilst we hope that parents/carers are always happy and satisfied with the service provided, we recognise there may be times when parents/carers have concerns, and this Complaints Policy sets out the process should there be concerns.

Strong relationships with our families depend on honest and direct communication between all parties, therefore if there are any concerns about the service we provide we strongly encourage parents/carers to contact us in line with the Complaints Policy. We ensure that complaints are dealt with 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/carer who has a concern or complaint about Ashbridge Independent School, Ashbridge Nursery Hutton or Ashbridge on Ribble. A separate policy is in place for Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm and The Fledglings Nursery, and this policy can be found on the website or on request at a Reception desk.

## **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**

Should a parent/carer have a concern about the care or education provided by the school or nursery, they should discuss it with the relevant member of the team. Initially this would usually be the child's class teacher in school, or key person, Room Leader or a member of the Nursery Management Team in nursery, depending on the concern. Concerns are welcomed by email or verbally and we aim to resolve concerns to the satisfaction of parents/carers within **10** working days, unless the concern is particularly complex.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Stage**

Should the issue still be unresolved, or if the parent/carer feels they have not received a satisfactory outcome, a formal complaint may be submitted. All formal complaints must be made in writing, including email, and directed to the Headteacher in school, or the Nursery Manager/Head of Nursery in the nurseries. The Headteacher or Nursery Manager/Head of Nursery, together with an additional member of the Senior Leadership Team if deemed necessary, will fully investigate the complaint and feedback to the parent/carer, usually within **28** days of the complaint being received. A full record of the complaint process is held.

The vast majority of complaints are resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2, however, if the parent/carer is still unsatisfied, they may move to Stage 3.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If the matter is still not resolved satisfactorily, either for the complainant or for the school or nursery, 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 if they wish to proceed with a Panel

Hearing. The complaint will then be heard by a panel appointed by the Directors and a final decision provided to parents/carers within **28** working days of the panel hearing 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/carers 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 its terms and conditions, reserve the right to give notice, withdraw the place and terminate the contract.

### **Complaints Relating to the Fulfilment of the EYFS Requirements**

Should a written complaint relate to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, the complaint will be investigated and an outcome provided to the parents/carers within **28** days of having received the complaint. This excludes Stage 3 of the process.

### **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 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 OFSTED/ISI or other relevant bodies requests access to them.

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 the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year available to relevant parties. This includes parents of pupils and prospective pupils, the Chief Inspector of schools, the Secretary of State or a approved representative of the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

### **Contacting ISI and OFSTED**

We hope that families feel able to direct complaints to the school or nursery in the first instance to give us the opportunity to investigate and address the complaint. However, a complainant may contact OFSTED or ISI for any reason relating to complaints, including if they feel we are not meeting the EYFS of other statutory requirements.

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M1 2WD  
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