

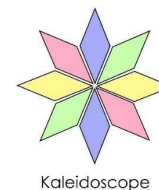
Kaleidoscope

## **Kaleidoscope School: Complaints Policy**

**INSPIRE : CREATE : DEVELOP**

**Policy date:** July 2023

**Policy review date:** July 2024



For the purpose of this policy and procedure, it is important to make a distinction between what is a complaint and what is an allegation against a person working with children.

### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is defined as an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction or concern you may have about facilities or services provided by Kaleidoscope school. For example, issues around fees, opening times, policies and procedures, staff ratios, food and drink or outings.

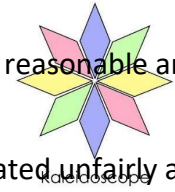
This does NOT include:

- harassment and bullying
- disciplinary or misconduct procedures
- concerns about a child in relation to safeguarding
- allegations against a person who works with children

These issues are covered by separate procedures, but if in doubt please speak to your manager, who will advise you on which procedure to follow.

### **Introduction**

The Kaleidoscope school are committed to dealing effectively with any concerns or complaint you may have about our services or facilities. We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction, where we can provide clarity for any issues, putting right any mistakes we may have made. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.



The Kaleidoscope School will try to address your concerns quickly and effectively. We will also try to find resolutions that are reasonable and acceptable to everyone concerned at the earliest possible stage.

All concerns and complaints will be dealt with in a positive manner and taken seriously, no individual will be penalised or treated unfairly as a result of making a complaint. Through this policy, we aim to put right any matter which may have gone wrong and to review systems and procedures in the light of the relevant circumstances.

### **Complaints we may not or will not consider.**

We may not consider complaints in the following circumstances:

- We receive the complaint more than three months after the incident occurred, or for ongoing issues more than six months from the last instance causing complaint
- We receive unreasonable or persistent complaints
- Matters that are the subject of legal action.

We will not consider complaints in the following circumstances:

- Where the complaint has been made previously to us about the same or similar issue which has been fully investigated and / or resolved under this policy.
- Anonymous complaints unless there are exceptional circumstances. These would include serious concerns such as Child Protection issues, where the school would either involve external agencies or else conduct its own internal review to test whether there is any corroborative evidence which might trigger a formal investigation.
- Complaints made by a third party on behalf of another person without prior authority.
  - If the complaint is about a third-party provider of a service that is organised or facilitated by us – complaints of this nature should be directed to the service provider.
- Matters relating to exclusions and admissions that have their own processes

If we decide that we are unable to consider your complaint, we will provide this in writing following the receipt of your complaint and explain why.

In some circumstances, we may decide that your concern should be considered using another policy or procedure.



## **Making a complaint**

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

In the majority of cases the concern should be handled, if at all possible, without the need to undertake any formal procedures and this should be the objective of all parties involved.

The complaint should be initially discussed with a member of staff.

There is no need at this stage for the complaint to be put in writing, however, the staff member should record the complaint with the following information:

- Name and contact details for the complainants
- Date and time of the complaint
- Nature of the complaint and the agreed actions to be taken including any timescales to complete them.

At this stage the complaint should ideally be raised with the relevant staff member within 5 school days of the complainant becoming aware of the complaint/incident and be resolved within 10 school days.

5 school days is considered to be an appropriate length of time to report a complaint so that it is still fresh in everyone's mind and can be dealt with and resolved as quickly as possible. Should the person raising the concern be unable to resolve the matter at this stage then they may feel it appropriate to move onto Stage 2 of the process.

However, it is expected that the majority of complaints would be resolved by the end of stage 1 without the need to escalate the complaint further.



## **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

If the complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 1, then the complainant may choose to proceed to Stage 2 by submitting a complaint in written form directly to the manager within 10 school days of the conclusion of Stage 1. On receipt of the written complaint, the manager will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the Stage 2 Complaint Form within 5 school days.
- Investigate the complaint and decide how best to resolve it. This would normally involve meeting with and interviewing the complainant and any other persons.
- Within 5 school days of completing the investigation, write to the complainant outlining how the investigation was conducted and the outcome of the complaint. This letter will also include details of what the complainant can do next if the complaint has still not been resolved to their satisfaction.

If, during an investigation of a complaint, there is evidence that a person in a position of trust may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, or behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they could pose a risk to children, then a referral must be made to the LADO.

Other matters which indicate there may have been a criminal offence committed may need to be referred to the local police station, for example theft of property.

Should the person raising the concern be unable to resolve the matter at this stage then they may feel it appropriate to move onto Stage 3 of the process.

## **Stage 3– Hearing before a panel.**

If the complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 1 or 2, then the complainant may choose to proceed to Stage 3.

At stage 3 the complaint will go to a panel hearing. The panel will have at least 3 members, there will be at least one panel member who is independent of the management and running of the school.

these may work for Beechfield Education Ltd but must not be directly involved with the complaint in any way or running of the service.

The complainant/ parent may attend and be accompanied to the panel hearing should they wish to.

The panel will discuss its findings and make recommendations, these will be provided to the complainant and the person complained about, in writing following the hearing.



### **Record keeping**

Written records will be kept of all complaints, whether these have been resolved at stage 1,2,3

These will include a log of action taken by the service as a result of the complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld), any correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints. These must be kept confidential except whether the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests to access them.

### **Expectations under this procedure**

When raising a complaint under this policy a complainant can expect The Kaleidoscope School to:

- Take the complaint seriously.
- Treat them with courtesy and respect.
- Deal with the complaint with discretion and confidentiality (although if the matter relates to the safety and wellbeing of a child then the school may have to share the details with other agencies).
- Meet the timescales set unless there are good reasons to extend these, in which case they will be informed of this.
- Seek and offer resolution at all stages.
- Inform them of the action taken to resolve the complaint and of any measures put in place to ensure that a similar complaint does not arise in the future.

In turn, The Kaleidoscope School expects that complainants will:

- Treat our staff with respect.

- Be mindful of the need to keep information relating to all other people involved confidential in the interest of all young people.
- Appreciate that if the Kaleidoscope School consider that disciplinary action may be necessary against a member of staff then this will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure and in confidence.

