



COMPLAINTS & REPRESENTATION POLICY

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Seadown School supports pupils, parents / carers and others to complain about any aspect of the care or education that they are not happy with should the need arise. Contact numbers of various agencies that may act on behalf of, or provide advice to the pupils and or others, are displayed within company properties.

Within Seadown School we recognise that pupils need to be protected and to progress in life, consequently we may, at times, advise a Pupil or significant other to make a complaint if the pupil's progression is being hindered.

Seadown School follow a complaints procedure, which is known and available to all pupils and their carers.

This procedure does not affect any of the right to use the Local Authorities' Complaints Procedure.

All complaints received by Seadown School will be recorded and fully investigated either by the managing director, proprietors or where appropriate an independent consultant.

The outcome of any investigation will be made known to the complainant and the Local Authority.

Those eligible to complain are:

- ✓ Pupil from Seadown School
- ✓ Any parent, family member or advocate of a pupil in the care of Seadown School
- ✓ Any person who has parental responsibility, but not necessarily a birth parent
- ✓ Any person with a sufficient interest in the pupil's welfare to warrant their complaint being considered
- ✓ Neighbours
- ✓ Any representative of the local authority.
- ✓

Dissatisfactions / complaints should be addressed directly either by telephone or in writing to:

- The Complaints Officer, PO Box 4921, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 9YA, Tel: 01903 282031

- The Complaints officer, Seadown School, 1a Farncombe Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 2BE, Tel. 01903 608750

PROCEDURE

- i. All pupils are given a copy of the Seadown School Complaints Procedure and a form to record such.
- ii. The complaints procedure within Seadown School aims to:-
 - Support pupils, where able to do so, parents / carers and others to make a complaint regardless of the content of such.
 - Allow the issues to be complained about to be kept 'live' and given the necessary weight of significance.
 - Allow pupils, parents/carers and others to feel able to make a complaint about the management of the service should the need arise.
 - Enable the complaint to be effectively dealt with, by the appropriate people and agencies.
- iii. Seadown School supports people to realise their right to complain should this be seen as benefiting the child or Pupil. The staff within Seadown School recognises that pupils may feel uncomfortable about complaining to them and they will, therefore, attempt to identify an appropriate adult to act as an advocate for the child or pupil.
- iv. Any child, pupil or carer that wishes to make a complaint is asked to complete, or is supported in completing, the official complaint form provided.
- v. All complaints will be seen by the manager of the service where the complaint is made and a strategy for dealing with the complaint will be formulated as soon as possible.
- vi. The head teacher reviews the Complaints Book on a regular basis. This form of monitoring enables policies and practices to be amended accordingly. It will also highlight recurring areas of concern so that these may be amended or eliminated.
- vii. All complaints will be recorded in the Complaints Book and reviewed by the Complaints Officer on a monthly basis.
- viii. The Complaints Book must be made available to Independent Inspection Teams and where relevant to the placing local authority.

ix. Further guidance regarding the management of complaints:

Once dissatisfaction has been voiced, the Complaints Officer will make every attempt to resolve this informally. In the event of there being no resolution the following stages in the formal procedure will commence.

INFORMAL STAGE

It is imperative that we maintain a relationship rooted in trust and consistency with all individuals that come into contact with our services as well as those individuals working within these.

We encourage anyone wishing to discuss their concerns on an informal basis in the first instance wherever possible. Members of staff shall demonstrate their willingness and availability to discuss any issues with parents and significant others involved.

STAGE ONE

On receipt of a written complaint, the Complaints Officer will acknowledge the complaint. The Officer will also offer assistance and advice on how to use the procedure and offer support and guidance in all stages of the procedure if required.

On receipt of a verbal complaint, the Complaints Officer will ensure that it is recorded in writing and the contents agreed by the complainant. The Officer will provide the same information, assistance, advice and support as mentioned above.

Seadown School recognise that users of our services may need considerable support at every stage in the proceedings if they are to follow through their complaint. Where appropriate, and with the permission of the child/pupil, the Complaints Officer will seek help from a family member or other significant person so as to ensure independence from Seadown School personnel. Where there is no other option, the child or pupil will be given the opportunity to choose a member of staff to support them.

Where the complainant is someone acting on behalf of a pupil, the Officer (depending on the level of understanding) will check with the child/pupil that the complaint is representative of his/her feelings and that he/she has granted permission for the complainant to act on his/her behalf. Where permission has not been granted, if the complainant is eligible (as defined above) he/she will still have a right to a consideration of the complaint.

Where the complainant is not eligible to act on behalf of a child or pupil, as defined under the Pupils Act 1989, Seadown School has a legislative duty to assess whether the nature of the complaint warrants being treated as if the complainant was the child or pupil.

STAGE TWO

The Complaints Officer will appoint an independent person and work with the appointed individual to investigate and consider the complaint. Both parties will provide written recommendations to be considered by the service's Directors and Management. After consideration of the recommendations, the Head Teacher will notify (within 28 days of the receipt of the complaint) the pupil, or if different, the complainant acting on behalf of the pupil, the independent person and any other significant body with a sufficient interest in the welfare of the pupil, of the outcome of the consideration. The complainant will be reminded of the right to challenge the decision.

STAGE THREE

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she has the right to have the complaint reconsidered by a panel, which will be inclusive of an independent person. In order to ensure that the consideration offers the opportunity for fresh input, the independent person will be different from the previous one.

If the complainant wishes to take this step, he/she must notify the Complaints Officer within 7 days of the receipt of the letter informing them of this decision.

The panel (which will be made up of the Complaints Officer, the independent person and a member of Seadown School personnel independent of line management) will meet within a further 7 days of receipt of the complainant's request.

The complainant has a right to attend the meeting and to submit any relevant information and to be accompanied by a person of his/her choice who may also offer contributions on their behalf. The complainant has a right to submit written information prior to the meeting. The original independent person has the same right to represent their views in writing prior to the meeting, or verbally at the meeting.

The panel will provide, within 48 hours, written recommendations (along with an explanation of those recommendations) to Seadown School Directors and Management. The panel will notify the complainant, the original independent person and any other significant body of their recommendations.

STAGE FOUR

Seadown School Directors and Management will meet with the independent person of the panel to consider the recommendations. The Complainant and any other significant persons who have an interest in the welfare of the pupil will be informed of the outcome within 28 days of receipt of the recommendations.

STAGE FIVE

Any changes due to the outcome will be implemented immediately, if practical, or within 28 days of the date of the final decision. All complaints, their nature and the outcome will be recorded in Seadown School Complaints Book along with the time scale for the implementation of the procedure and for the implementation of any actions following the final decision.

- x. Seadown School will comply with legislative requirements under the Pupils Act 1989 and ensure that the operation and effectiveness of the Complaints Procedure is monitored on a regular basis.
- xi. To this end, the Complaints Officer will compile an annual report, which will be made available to Ofsted. The report will provide information on the number and nature of complaints, performance in relation to time scales for dealing with a complaint, outcomes, action taken and performance in relation to timescales for implementing any action. The monitoring process will seek where possible to assess user satisfaction and collate the views of those who have used the procedure in relation to any improvements, which may be made.

DEFINITIONS

Independent Person: a person who is not party to the initial complaint and not directly involved in their daily care of the child/complainant.

Eligibility by virtue of having sufficient interest in the child's/ pupil's welfare: there is no absolute defined list of people but such bodies may include significant family members, broker, family friends, GPs, care manager, social worker, school teachers, therapist, independent visitor etc.

**Complaint Form**

Your name	
Pupil name <i>(if different to above)</i>	
Your relationship to pupil <i>(if applicable)</i>	
Your address and postcode	
Your telephone number <i>(day/evening/mobile)</i>	
Your email address	

Details of complaint

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What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve this issue?
(State who you spoke to and the response you received)

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What actions do you feel may resolve the problem at this stage?

--

Please give details of any paperwork attached

--

Signature	
Date	

Official Use Only	
Date acknowledgment sent	
Acknowledgment sent by	
Complaint referred to	
Date	
Any other supporting documentation	



Complaint Investigation Form

Complaint Investigation Reference	No.		
Running Sheet	Ref No.		
Log Book	Ref No.		
	Ref No.		

Source of complaint

Details of complaint

What would the complainant like to happen?

Who has been spoken to?

What information has been gathered?

Who has this information been passed to?

--

What actions have been taken?

--

Is the complainant satisfied with the outcome? If not, what would they like to happen next?

--

Signature

Date

--

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Complaint Action Form

Complaint Action Reference		No.	
Cross reference numbers			
Complaint Investigation	Ref No.		Ref No.
Running Sheet	Ref No.		Ref No.
Log Book	Ref No.		Ref No.

What was the initial complaint?

Empty text box for recording the initial complaint.

How was it resolved?

Empty text box for recording how the complaint was resolved.

What are the lessons learned?

What are we going to do now?

How long have we given ourselves to implement change?

When, how and by whom will the plan be reviewed/evaluated?	

Form completed by	
Date	

Head Teacher's comments	
Head Teacher's Signature	
Date	
Managing Director's Signature	
Date	
Actions	