

Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Nightingale welcomes suggestions on how we might improve what we do. If as a parent or carer you feel that there is something that Nightingale could be doing better, please bring your comments or suggestions to us. Please rest assured that, no matter what you want to discuss with us, our support and respect for your child will remain unaffected.
- 1.2 Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem properly if it took place some time ago. We do appreciate the support and assistance we receive from parents and carers in addressing any problems that arise. Problems sometimes arise from misunderstandings which are easily addressed and most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with the member of staff concerned.

2. Complaints Procedure

- 2.1 If, having spoken to your child's teacher, you feel that your concern has not been fully addressed, you should speak to the Complaints Co-ordinator. She will investigate the problem and discuss the findings with you so that we can find a way forward together which serves the best interest of both Nightingale and your child. In the unlikely event of the problem remaining unresolved you can make a complaint in writing and, if necessary, refer it to the Chair of the Management Committee.
- 2.2 The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarised in the following stages:

Stage 1: Informal Action

- If the matter concerns student learning or welfare, parents/ carers can discuss this with the relevant with the member of staff.
- If they are not happy that the situation is resolved they can discuss this with the Complaints Co-ordinator.
- If the matter concerns a member of staff or policy or procedure, parents/carers should raise this with the Complaints Co-ordinator.
- If the Complaints Co-ordinator is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note is made, including complainant's name, phone number and date, and the parent is contacted as soon as the matter has been investigated. The Complaints Co-ordinator may also consult the Teacher-in-Charge at this stage.
- The Complaints Co-ordinator ensures that the parent or carer is clear what action or monitoring of the situation has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, the parent or carer will be asked if they wish for their concern to be considered further.

Stage 2: Referral to the Teacher-in-Charge

- The Teacher-in-Charge acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days.
- A meeting is arranged with the complainant to clarify and supplement any information given.
- The Teacher-in-Charge investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centres on a student, the student would normally be interviewed with a parent present or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is not directly involved.
- The Teacher-in-Charge keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Teacher-in-Charge responds. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, they are advised to write to the Chair of the Management Committee.
- If the complaint is against the Teacher-in-Charge, the Stage 2 procedures are carried out by the Chair of the Management Committee.

Stage 3: Review by the Management Committee

- The Chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a Committee of three members of Nightingale's Management Committee within 20 working days.
- The Chair arranges to convene a Complaints Panel elected from members of the Management Committee. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a Chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible.
- The Chair of the Management Committee will write and inform all concerned of the date, time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notification to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence.
- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Management Committee to ensure that the meeting is properly minuted.
- After the meeting, the Management Committee will consider the evidence and a written decision will be sent to the Teacher-in-Charge and the complainant within 15 working days.

Stage 4: Beyond the Management Committee

Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 1996 on the grounds that a Governing Body, Management Committee or Local Authority is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.

You can contact the DfE from here: <https://form.education.gov.uk>

3. Contacts at Nightingale

- 3.1 Complaints Co-ordinator: F. Roberts
- 3.2 Teacher-in-Charge: M. Mason
- 3.3 Chair of the Management Committee: J. Nelms

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Complaints Procedure Flowchart

