



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY:
COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM PARENTS

This policy is made available to the parents of all pupils and of all prospective pupils on our website; copies may also be requested from the School Office. Staff can also find the policy in the policies folder in Upper School staff room, Lower School Staff Room and Nursery Staff Room.

Newbridge Preparatory School places the highest priority on the quality of its teaching and pastoral care. Newbridge Preparatory School highly values both its pupils and parents and welcomes suggestions and comments from parents. The Headmistress and all staff encourage regular contact with parents, both verbal and written. We also welcome feedback from parents when they are pleased with the School.

Newbridge Preparatory School recognises that if parents do have concerns and complaints then they should be treated respectfully and seriously. This policy outlines the steps that parents should follow if they are unhappy about any matter and seek action by the school.

The complaints process is available to parents of children currently entered on the admissions register at Newbridge Preparatory School. The procedure does apply to past pupils but only if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered. Likewise, the procedure does not apply to parents of prospective pupils.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response. We wish to ensure that:

- Parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- Parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- We take action where appropriate.

There are 3 stages to the complaints procedure:

- 1. Informal**
- 2. Formal**
- 3. Directors' Panel**

1. INFORMAL

“How should I complain?”

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. A written record will be made of all complaints and the date on which they were received. An initial response will be made within 24 hours.

Any member of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss.

“I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”

Newbridge Preparatory School is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

“I am not sure whether to complain or not”

If as a parent you have concerns, you are entitled to complain. If in doubt, you should contact Newbridge Preparatory School as we are here to help.

“What will happen next?”

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction. Your initial contact will most often be responded to by the person most closely concerned with the issue but a Senior Manager will have been made aware within 48 hours of the concern being raised. A Senior Manager will follow up the initial concern at the end of the process to ensure a satisfactory resolution has been found. However, if you are not satisfied you should put your complaint in writing to the Headmistress of Newbridge Preparatory School, 51 Newbridge Crescent, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 0LH.

2. FORMAL

If you have made a complaint in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the Headmistress will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. Written records will be kept of these discussions.

In most cases, the Headmistress will meet the parents concerned, normally within 10 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Head and those directly involved. It is Newbridge Preparatory School’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside of Newbridge Preparatory School aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police. You would be fully informed if this were to happen. Inspectors may also request access to correspondence statements and records of complaints under paragraph 7(K) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014.

Statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints may not be pursued.

Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures, as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within Newbridge Preparatory School.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

3. DIRECTORS' PANEL

If the matter remains unresolved, the Headmistress will refer the matter to the Chairman of Directors who will appoint a panel to hear your complaint. The panel will consist of three persons (not previously directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint), one of whom is independent of Newbridge Preparatory School. The panel will be convened within 14 working days of parents indicating that they are not satisfied with the Headmistress' response.

Parents may be accompanied by one other person to the panel hearing but legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The Panel will write to the parents, and where relevant, to the person being complained about, informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within five working days of the completion of the hearing. This time scale also ensures that all complaints will be dealt with within the EYFS time-frame of 28 days. Copies of such findings and recommendations will also be sent to the Head and be available on Newbridge Preparatory Schools premises for inspection by the Chairman of Directors.

Newbridge Preparatory School recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.

You can contact ISI if you think that Newbridge Preparatory School has broken the law, or acted unreasonably. Unreasonableness, in the strict legal sense means acting in a way in which no reasonable authority could act. You should include copies of any refusal letters you have received, a copy of the appeal panel's decision, copies of any further correspondence with Newbridge Preparatory School and any relevant supporting evidence.

You can contact Ofsted if you think that Newbridge Preparatory School has not fulfilled the EYFS Requirements after you have been through all the stages including a school investigation and its outcome has been given in writing with 28 days.

WRITTEN RECORD OF COMPLAINTS

The school will keep an annual written record of complaints. In relation to these complaints, the school will record

- whether they are then resolved at that stage or proceed to a panel hearing
- the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and
- provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

A log is also kept of informal concerns, for management purposes to enable patterns of concern to be monitored.

There were no formal complaints in 2012/2013

There were no formal complaints in 2013/2014

There were no formal complaints in 2014/2015

There have been no formal complaints recorded with 2015/2016.

18/05/2013

SAF

Reviewed 12/01/2016

SAF

Reviewed 17/01/2016

SAF

Contact Details:

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0300 123 1231

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-us/how-complain>

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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London

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<http://www.isi.net/complaintsschool/>