



PARENTAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

(Inclusive of EYFS)

This policy provides a set structure for parents of pupils at the school to use should they wish to make a complaint. It follows the three stage process of informal, formal and panel hearing (inclusive of clear time scales), details arrangements for record keeping as well specific rules regarding the confidentiality of correspondence, statements and records.

This policy only applies to current pupils (and their parents). However, if a complaint is lodged *before* a child subsequently leaves the school, it must continue to be dealt with following the procedure detailed below.

This policy is made available to parents via the school website, is referred to in the material given to parents when they start at Terra Nova, is referenced in the start of year literature disseminated by the Headmaster and is kept as a hard copy for reference in the school office.

INITIAL PROCEDURE: INFORMAL CONSIDERATION

It is hoped that most complaints or concerns will be sensitively dealt with by Form Teachers and all those involved in the care of young people at Terra Nova School. Similarly, key persons within the EYFS setting (Headmaster, Head of EYFS) must be prepared to respond to complaints addressed to them in a sensitive and carefully considered manner.

All Governors, Senior Management and academic and non-academic staff should be receptive to a complaint/concern from a parent. It is recognised, however, that in most cases a complaint will be made to the Headmaster.

THE THREE STAGE PROCESS

In the event of a complaint to the Headmaster or Head of EYFS, a three-stage process exists. Terra Nova undertakes to deal with complaints as sympathetically and expeditiously as possible; and to resolve them, either to the complainant's satisfaction or with an otherwise appropriate outcome, which balances the rights and duties of students. It should be noted that the timescales given refer to term time and, should a complaint be received during the school holidays, these timescales will be doubled.

Stage 1: Informal resolution.

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact the Headmaster or in the Early Years setting the Head of EYFS. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight-away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. Should the matter not be resolved within **five** working days, or in the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution.

The Headmaster or Head of EYFS should be informed in writing that a Formal Complaint is to be lodged and the Parental Complaints Form (Appendix 1) should ideally be completed, although a previously supplied letter or email clearly stating that a formal complaint is being lodged is also acceptable.

The Headmaster will respond to the complainant in writing within **24 hours**, explaining the steps which he intends to take to deal with the complaint. The Headmaster will meet with the complainant within **7 days** and, following investigation, report his findings and recommendations to the complainant.

During school holiday periods or when the Headmaster is unavailable the complaint will be dealt with by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The complainant will be informed of the Senior Leadership Team member taking responsibility for dealing with the complaint.

On the occasion of any meeting with the Headmaster the complainant may be accompanied by a friend. The term 'friend' includes (but is not restricted to) another parent or a member of staff. If, following receipt of the Headmaster's report, the complainant remains unsatisfied, the Headmaster will pass on all information to the Chair of Governors (through the Clerk to the Governors), detailing fully the nature of the complaint and actions taken to date. The Chair of Governors (or in his absence, an appointed member of the Governing Body) will, within **7 days** meet with the complainant and will attempt to resolve the matter informally and by mutual agreement. Records will be kept of all meetings.

Stage 3: Panel Hearing

If the complaint is not resolved by the above meeting, the Governors of Terra Nova School will convene within **21 days** a panel of at least three individuals not directly involved or connected with the matters which are the subject of the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the School. The panel will consider the complaint at a formal hearing. The complainant will be entitled to attend (accompanied by a friend, if he/she so wishes) at such hearing.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the hearing, the findings and recommendations of the panel will be communicated to the complainant in writing (and verbally, where appropriate) and to any other relevant party or parties including the person being complained about. The recommendations of the panel are available for inspection, on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and the Headmaster.

In the event that the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of any complaint or the fulfillment of EYFS requirements the complainant may have recourse to ask for the intervention of Ofsted or the Independent Schools Inspectorate. The address and contact details for Ofsted and ISI are provided below:

Ofsted

www.ofsted.gov.uk
Royal Exchange
Manchester, M2 7LA
0845 640 4040

ISI

www.isi.net
Independent Schools Inspectorate
CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA

RECORD KEEPING

All informal complaints and concerns are logged on the school management system. For formal complaints The Headmaster will maintain a complaints folder and record details within the complaints log. A member of the Governing Body will review these records of complaints annually. A record of any resolution made must be recorded, detailing the stage at which the complaint was resolved and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint regardless of whether they are upheld. Pupils whose parents make complaints in good faith will not be penalised in any way.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CORRESPONDENCE, STATEMENTS AND RECORDS

Parents can be assured that all complaints and concerns will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or inspecting body under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where other legal obligation prevails.

EXCLUSIONS OF PUPILS

Details of our policy with regard to exclusions can be found in the Discipline and Sanctions Policy.



Date of complaint:

Nature of complaint

The information below should contain specific detail, including:

- ★ The nature of the complaint;
- ★ Who the complaint is being made against;
- ★ Time and date of the nature of the complaint.

Nature of Complaint:	

Reviewed April 2019