

# RYDES HILL PREPARATORY SCHOOL & NURSERY

## P39 (ISI 33A) – COMPLAINTS POLICY



**RYDES HILL**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL & NURSERY

### MISSION STATEMENT

- ❖ Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery is a Catholic school where children learn how to live in loving relationship with God and each other.
- ❖ Christian virtues of love and justice, faith and courage, hope and perseverance are fostered.
- ❖ Pupils and staff comprise individuals of different faiths and beliefs but the Rydes Hill community aspires to unity within the life of the school based on shared moral values.
- ❖ The importance placed on the development of individual talents is at the heart of what school stands for and all are encouraged and challenged to be the best they can be.

Written By :	Alison Packman – Compliance Officer	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Reviewed By :	Kathryn Pillar – Bursar	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Approved By :	Sarah Norville – Headmistress	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Governor Review By :	Governing Body	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

## Contents

Revision History .....	3
Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions .....	3
Aim / Objective / Statement of Intent.....	4
Introduction.....	4
The difference between a concern and a complaint .....	4
The Independent Schools’ Inspectorate (ISI) .....	5
How to raise a concern or make a complaint.....	5
Scope of this Complaints Policy .....	6
Stage 1 – Informal Resolution .....	7
Stage 2 – Formal Resolution .....	7
Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing.....	8
Managing serial and unreasonable complaints.....	12
Appendix A – Pupil Complaints Procedure.....	14
Appendix B – Letter from Headmistress .....	15
Appendix C – Contact Details .....	17

## Revision History

Revision	Paragraph Number	Revision
March 2011		New Document
March 2012		
March 2013		
March 2014		
March 2015		
March 2016		
March 2017		
April 2018		
May 2019		
March 2020	Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions  Paragraph 4 Paragraph 8 Paragraph 11 Paragraph 13 Paragraph 23 Paragraph 42 Paragraph 53 Paragraph 59 Paragraph 60	Added "Staff"  Add "member of staff," Last sentence added Add "or member of staff" Add ", as per paragraph 2" Rewritten Rewritten Delete "parent's" Final sentence added Details of Alternative Dispute Resolution added

## Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions

Abbreviation / Acronym	Definition
DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage (i.e. Nursery and Kindergarten classes)
INSET	In service training
ISI	Independent Schools' Inspectorate
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
SLT	Senior Leadership Team (Headmistress, Bursar, Deputy Head (Academic) and Deputy Head (Pastoral))
Staff	Full-time and part-time personnel working at the School whether employed by them directly or not (i.e. includes peripatetic staff, visiting coaches and tutors, volunteers etc.)

## Aim / Objective / Statement of Intent

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS.

1. The objective of this policy is to ensure a clear understanding of the process to be followed should any person, including members of the public, wish to raise a complaint against the School. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate school policies, such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions, we will use this complaints policy.
2. All reference to “working days” should be interpreted as meaning days during the main School term and do not refer to all round nursery provision, weekends or weekdays during holiday periods, including INSET days.
3. A complaint must be raised within three months of the incident or where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. Please refer also to the Section “Scope of this Complaints Procedure”.

## Introduction

4. Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents/carers, pupils, member of staff, or any member of the public, do have a complaint it is our intention:
  - To deal with the complaint promptly
  - To resolve a complaint by informal means if at all possible
  - To deal with a complaint with sensitivity and to maintain confidentiality at all times
  - To be impartial at all times
  - To ensure that a thorough investigation is carried out of all matters giving rise to the complaint and to provide appropriate redress, where necessary.

## The difference between a concern and a complaint

5. A concern may be defined as *‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’*.
6. A complaint may be defined as *‘an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action’*.
7. It is in everyone’s interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints’ procedure. Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.
8. Where concerns relate to current parents and their children, parents are encouraged to speak to class teachers as soon as an issue is of concern to them. Teaching staff will try to

resolve issues promptly and they will log all complaints received, whether verbal or written. Members of staff are encouraged in the first instance to speak to their line manager, before escalating their concern to the Headmistress or Bursar.

9. If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Headmistress, will refer you to another staff member or will hear your concern herself. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headmistress will refer you to another staff member or will hear your concern herself. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.
10. We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints' procedure.
11. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil or member of staff is unhappy and seeks action by the School will be treated as a complaint under this procedure.

### **The Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI)**

12. Notwithstanding the procedures set out in this document, any parents have the right to address complaints directly to the ISI. Contact details are set out in Appendix B of this procedure.
13. The different stages of the procedure are set out below. Reference to 'working days' is to a day on which the School is in session, as per paragraph 2.

### **How to raise a concern or make a complaint**

14. A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing, including by email, or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.
15. Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints unless their complaint involves or is about the Headmistress. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.
16. However, complaints that involve or are about the Headmistress should be addressed to Mrs Katie Cardona, Chair of Governors, c/o Mrs Kathryn Pillar, Bursar & Clerk to the Governors, Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery, Rydes Hill House, Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 8BP or by email to [bursar@rydeshill.com](mailto:bursar@rydeshill.com)
17. Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to Mrs Kathryn Pillar, Bursar & Clerk to the Governors, Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery, Rydes Hill House, Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 8BP or by email to [bursar@rydeshill.com](mailto:bursar@rydeshill.com). Letters and emails should be marked "Private & Confidential".

18. In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, in providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.
19. We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headmistress or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

### Scope of this Complaints Policy

20. This policy covers all complaints about any provision of facilities or services by Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures or School policies, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions</li> </ul>	Refer to our Admissions Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li> </ul>	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our Safeguarding Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exclusion / Suspension</li> </ul>	Complaints about the suspension or permanent exclusion can be made through the School's Complaints Policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors. Details can be found in Section E3 of the Staff Handbook.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our School should complain through the School's Complaints Policy.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff grievances</li> </ul>	Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the School's internal grievance procedures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conduct</li> </ul>	Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the School's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FRHPS</li> </ul>	Complaints relating to the activities of FRHPS should be addressed to the Chair of FRHPS and to the Headmistress.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities, or providers whom the school contracts with to</li> </ul>	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.</p> <p>Parents of current pupils may also choose to inform the Bursar if they remain unhappy with the Providers service</p>

provide a service to parents (e.g. School Uniform Supplier)	
---	--

## Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

21. At each stage in the procedure, the School wants to resolve the complaint and it is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
22. If parents/carers of a current pupil have a complaint they should normally contact their child's teacher, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmistress. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by the class teacher to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for her to consult either of the Deputy Heads or the Headmistress. Complaints made directly to either of the Deputy Heads or Headmistress will usually be referred to the relevant class teacher unless either of the Deputy Heads or Headmistress deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
23. If any other person (other than the parent/carer of a current pupil) wishes to raise a complaint they should, depending on the nature of the complaint, either contact the Headmistress or Bursar.
24. The member of staff initially receiving the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they are received.
25. Should the matter not be resolved within **10 working days**, or in the event that the class teacher or other member of staff and the complainant fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then complainants will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

## Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

26. If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the complainants should put their complaint in writing, either by letter or by email, to the Headmistress (unless they are about the Headmistress). The Headmistress will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing, either by letter or by email, within **3 working days** of receipt. Within this response, the Headmistress will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Headmistress may also consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this. The Headmistress may choose to delegate the investigation to another member of SLT, or conduct the investigation herself but will not delegate the decision to be taken.
27. In most cases, the Headmistress or another senior member of staff, not already involved in the complaint, will meet/speak to the complainant, normally within **10 working days** of

receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

28. It may be necessary for the Headmistress or other member of SLT to carry out further investigations and these will begin as soon as possible. If necessary, the Headmistress or other member of SLT will interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish.
29. The Headmistress or relevant member of SLT will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the investigation.
30. Once the Headmistress is satisfied that, in so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the complainant will be provided with a response in writing, either by letter or by email, within **28 working days** of receipt of the complaint by the Headmistress (i.e. the commencement of Stage 2 – Formal Resolution). If the Headmistress is unable to meet this deadline, she will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.
31. The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions that Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery will take to resolve the complaint.
32. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.
33. If the complaint is about the Headmistress, or a member of the Governing Body, (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled Governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 2.
34. If the complaint is:
  - Jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
  - The entire Governing Body or
  - The majority of the Governing Body,

Stage 2 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the Governing Body or the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. At the conclusion of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response, either by letter or by email.

### **Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing**

35. This is the final stage of the Complaints Procedure.
36. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2 and seeks to invoke Stage 3 (following failure to reach an earlier resolution), they should inform the Chair of Governors in writing **within 15 working days** of receiving the decision. Requests received outside of



this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply. The Chair of Governors can be contacted by sending your letter to:

Mrs Katie Cardona,  
Chair of Governors,  
c/o Mrs Kathryn Pillar,  
Clerk to the Governors,  
Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery,  
Aldershot Road,  
Guildford,  
GU2 8BP

Or via email to: [bursar@rydeshill.com](mailto:bursar@rydeshill.com) marked "For the Attention of Chair of Governors"

37. The Clerk to the Governors will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing, either by letter or by email, **within 3 working days**.
38. The Chair of Governors will be responsible for convening a Governing Body Complaints Panel Hearing which will be scheduled to be held within **15 working days** of receipt of the notification that the complainant wishes to proceed to a Complaints Panel Hearing. The Clerk to the Governing Body will write to the complainant to inform them of the date, time and venue of the meeting ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible, and will keep the complainant informed should any changes be necessary.
39. If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk of the Governing Body will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the Complainants absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.
40. The Complaints Panel will be formed of the first two, impartial, governors available along with one independent panel member.
41. The DfE has provided guidance on the identity of the independent panel member as follows :
 

*"Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force might be considered."*
42. If there are fewer than two impartial governors available, the Clerk will source an additional independent panel member after discussing the matter with the Chair of Governors.
43. The Chair of the Complaints panel is recommended by the Chair of Governors unless the complaint is about the Chair of Governors. In this case the members of the Complaints panel will decide amongst themselves who is best placed to become Chair of the panel.

44. Complainants will be informed in writing of the members of the Complaints Panel **at least 10 working days** before the meeting by the Clerk to the Governing Body.
45. Complainants may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representatives will not normally be appropriate however there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.
46. For instance, if a School employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.
47. Additional persons may be admitted to the meeting to support the complainant where this is solely for the purpose of providing assistance with accessing the meeting. For example, for the provision of sign language, translation to English, medical treatment etc.
48. If the panel deem it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the Hearing. The Clerk to the Governing Body will request these particulars and ensure copies of such particulars are supplied to all parties not later than **5 working days** prior to the Hearing.
49. The Complaints Panel will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded, however may choose to do so if they feel it is essential evidence in order to reach a fair conclusion.
50. The Complaints Panel will also not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint to be included. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the Procedure.
51. The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recording of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.
52. The Complaints Panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The panel can:
  - Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
  - Uphold the complaint in whole or in partIf the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the panel will
  - Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
  - Where appropriate, recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.
53. If possible, the Complaints Panel will resolve the complaint at the meeting without the need for further investigation. The Chair of the Complaints Panel will write to the complainant with a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it within **5 working days** of the Hearing.

54. Where further investigation is required, the Complaints Panel will decide how it should be carried out and the Chair of the Complaints Panel will inform the complainant of the steps it proposes to take and the likely timescale for completing the further investigation. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Complaints Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. The Chair of the Complaints Panel will write to the complainant within **10 working days** of the decision detailing any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of its decision and reasons for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery will take to resolve the complaint. The decision of the Complaints Panel will be final.

55. If the complaint is:

- Jointly about the Chair and Vice Chair or
- The entire governing body or
- The majority of the governing body

Stage 3 will be heard by a panel of 3 independent panel members.

56. **A copy of the findings and recommendations of the Panel will be sent by email or otherwise given to the complainant and where relevant the person complained about. The Panel's findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and Headmistress.**

57. A formal written record of all complaints that are made informally, where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, will be kept and whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

58. Complainants can be assured that all correspondence, 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 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

59. The School's complaints procedure is included in information given to new parents in the Parent Handbook (P26) and is publicised on the School's website both to prospective families, current parents and to the general public. A copy of the procedure is also available to view at the School, in the School Office. The School will always provide a copy of the complaints' procedure on request. Any request should be made to the Headmistress directly or to her PA. Staff are directed to the Staff Handbook.

60. If the complainant believes the School did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education or Independent Schools Inspectorate after they have completed Stage 3. The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 require the School to provide you on conclusion of the final stage of the School's Complaints Procedure with the name and address of an alternative dispute resolution provider who has been certified by the Chartered Trading Standards

Institute as competent to resolve consumer disputes. These details are set out below. However, please note that the School is not obliged to enter into alternative dispute resolution and nor is it willing to do so in this instance. Details of how to submit a complaint to these two bodies can be found on their websites.

### **Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

<https://www.isi.net/parents-and-pupils/concerns-about-a-school>

### **Department for Education**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/complaints-procedure#complain-about-a-school-or-an-academy>

### **OFSTED**

ICASO 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 70 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1EU

[applications@cedr.com](mailto:applications@cedr.com)

## **Managing serial and unreasonable complaints**

61. Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our School. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.
  
62. The School defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the School, such as, if the complainant:
  - Refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
  - Refuses to co-operate with the complaints' investigation process
  - Refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints' procedure
  - Insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints' procedure or with good practice
  - Introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on
  - Raises large number of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
  - Makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
  - Changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
  - Repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
  - Refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into the complaint where the School's complaints procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Independent Schools Inspectorate and/or Department for Education

- Seeks an unrealistic outcome
  - Makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and/or by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
  - Uses threats to intimidate
  - Uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
  - Knowingly provides falsified information
  - Publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums
63. Complainants should try to limit their communication with the School that relates to their complaint, whilst the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, telephone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached.
64. Whenever possible, the Headmistress or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.
65. If the behaviour continues, the Headmistress will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.
66. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include barring an individual from Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery and excluding the pupil.

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2013 – 2014 : 0

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2014 – 2015 : 0

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2015 – 2016 : 0

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2016 – 2017 : 0

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2017 – 2018 : 0

Number of formal complaints in previous academic year 2018 – 2019 : 1 – partially upheld

List of Appendices:-

Appendix A – Pupil Complaints Procedure

Appendix B – Letter to Parents from the Headmistress

Appendix C – Contact details for Headmistress, Bursar, ISI and OFSTED

## Appendix A – Pupil Complaints Procedure

The principles which apply to parental complaints also apply to complaints and concerns from pupils.

We believe that all pupils should:

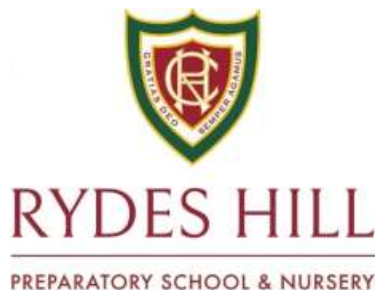
- Be able to raise concerns with any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable
- Feel confident that their concern or complaint, no matter how trivial, will be listened to
- Report incidents / concerns as soon as possible
- Know that the member of staff will investigate the concern or allegation and take appropriate action to ensure that the concern or complaint is fully addressed
- Know that bullying will not be tolerated
- Use the “Feelings Box” to express their ideas and feelings in writing

Complaints, and ways of dealing with them, are explained to pupils on a regular basis. Our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) Programme is used not only to teach pupils how to behave and how to be aware of the feelings of others, but also in encouraging them to understand that their views matter.

In more complex situations, a written record of outcomes may be shared with the pupil(s) involved.

Our PSHCE Policy (P44) is available to parents to read from the School Office. Please contact the School Office by email ([enquiries@rydeshill.com](mailto:enquiries@rydeshill.com)) or telephone (01483 563160) during term-time if you wish to receive a copy of this policy.

## Appendix B – Letter from Headmistress



Dear Parents

May 2019

In line with government regulations, we are required to send you a letter explaining the School's Complaints Procedure and where to obtain a copy. As well as being available in the School office on request, it is available on the School website under the "About Us", "Policies" section.

### Compliments and Complaints

At Rydes Hill we strive to be a school where you are more than satisfied with what we do to support your child, especially in difficult situations. When you think we do this particularly well, please let us know. Staff work hard for the pupils and we all want to recognise that.

However, sometimes things may not go well. For example, you may feel that your child is being bullied and you are not happy that the right things have been done to address this. We hope that good communication would solve such a problem. Our aim is that by careful listening, constructive discussion and sensible actions we can work together to solve problems, and so improve our school systems further but if the problem persists, you may wish to make a complaint.

### When should I complain?

If you believe something is seriously wrong, then make a complaint. We will investigate it and base what we do on the Governing Body's agreed Policy which is available as detailed above.

### Whom do I contact?

That depends on the particular situation. Often your child's class teacher will be able to deal with the matter. More serious problems might require the intervention of a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Headmistress. Most problems can be solved in this way. A complaint about the conduct of the Headmistress should go to the Chairman of Governors, addressed to the Clerk of Governors at the school address.

Certain specific complaints (e.g. about school admissions) are dealt with separately. Staff at the school can advise you where to direct your complaint or you can contact the ISI or Ofsted directly; contact details are included in the Complaints Policy.

### What if the matter is still unresolved?

You should write to the Headmistress, in the first instance, if you are dissatisfied with the handling of a complaint. The Headmistress will investigate the matter and may invite you to a meeting to talk about it. The school may arrange for a suitable mediator to be present.

cont/...

**Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery**  
 Rydes Hill House, Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 8BP  
 Tel: 01483 563160 Email: [enquiries@rydeshill.com](mailto:enquiries@rydeshill.com) [www.rydeshill.com](http://www.rydeshill.com)  
 Registered Charity No. 299411



After trying all other avenues, you may decide to make a formal complaint to the Governing Body by sending a letter to the Clerk to the Governors at the school address. The Governors will investigate and will invite you to meet them to discuss your concerns.

If you are still dissatisfied, after an investigation by the Governing Body, you may appeal to the ISI. In cases where you believe that the school has acted unlawfully or unreasonably, or failed to fulfil a statutory duty, you can take your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

All this looks very formal but very few problems have to go through such steps because we work hard to understand and resolve problems as quickly as possible. In this way our pupils at Rydes Hill get the best possible chance to succeed in their learning.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Norville  
Headmistress

Updated: March 2012  
Updated: March 2013  
Updated: March 2014  
Updated: March 2015  
Updated: March 2016  
Updated: March 2017  
Updated: April 2018  
Updated: May 2019

Date of Next Review: May 2020

**Rydes Hill Preparatory School & Nursery**  
Rydes Hill House, Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 8BP  
Tel: 01483 563160 Email: [enquiries@rydeshill.com](mailto:enquiries@rydeshill.com)  
[www.rydeshill.com](http://www.rydeshill.com)  
Registered Charity No.  
299411



## Appendix C – Contact Details

<b>Headmistress</b>	Mrs Sarah Norville	<a href="mailto:headmistress@rydeshill.com">headmistress@rydeshill.com</a>	Rydes Hill Preparatory School Rydes Hill House Aldershot Road Guildford Surrey GU2 8BP Tel: 01483 563 160
<b>Bursar</b>	Mrs Kathryn Pillar	<a href="mailto:bursar@rydeshill.com">bursar@rydeshill.com</a>	
<b>Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)</b>		<a href="mailto:concerns@isi.net">concerns@isi.net</a>	Independent Schools Inspectorate First Floor CAP House 9-12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HA Tel: 020 7600 0100