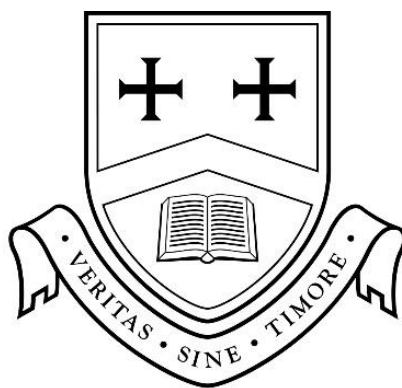




CATERHAM
PREP

Complaints Policy

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<i>This policy is reviewed annually</i>	

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1. Principles and Scope

Independent School Standards – Parts 6, 7 and 8

Caterham Prep School recognises that parents will, from time to time, have concerns about the progress, achievement, behaviour or welfare of their child. Parents are encouraged to make those concerns known to staff so that they can be addressed in partnership with the school.

For the purpose of our Complaints Policy and procedures the term 'parents' includes guardians. The procedure does not apply to parents of prospective pupils. The complaints procedure does apply to past pupils if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered. This procedure does not apply to challenges to decisions concerning Suspension, Required Withdrawal or Expulsion, which are dealt with under the School's Suspension, Required Withdrawal, Expulsion and Review (Prep) Policy.

This policy works in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy and the Complaints Policy for Pupils. Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, the School's safeguarding procedures will take precedence and the matter will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate.

2. Complaints and the EYFS

EYFS Statutory Framework 2026 – paragraphs 3.101–3.102; Independent School Standards – Part 7

The School's complaints procedure applies fully to children in Reception. Written complaints relating to how the School is fulfilling the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the person who made the complaint will be notified of the outcome within 28 days of the complaint being received. A written record of such complaints and their outcomes will be kept and made available to Ofsted on request. Parents and carers of children in Reception may contact Ofsted if they believe that the School is not meeting the requirements of the EYFS. Relevant contact details are provided below.

Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M21 2WD
Phone: 0300 123 1231 or e-mail enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

As an independent school inspected by ISI, parents may also contact ISI where appropriate.

ISI: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA
Phone: 020 77768849 or e-mail via the ISI website: info@isi.net

3. Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Independent School Standards – Part 7, paragraph 33(d)

It is hoped that most concerns and complaints can be resolved informally and at an early stage.

Parents should normally raise a concern in the first instance with:

- the Class Teacher/Form Tutor for a day-to-day academic, pastoral or behavioural concern;
- the relevant Head of Year or subject leader where appropriate;
- the Head of Pre-Prep for a more serious matter concerning a pupil in Reception–Year 2;
- the Head of School (Prep) for a more serious matter concerning a pupil in Years 3–6, or where a concern has not been resolved at an earlier stage;
- the Bursary for matters relating to fees, finance or non-academic services.

The School will normally seek to resolve Stage 1 complaints within 28 working days during term time. Where this is not possible, parents will be informed of the reason and given a revised timescale.

4. Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

Independent School Standards – Part 7, paragraph 33(e)

Where a parent remains dissatisfied following Stage 1, the complaint should be made formally in writing to the Headmaster.

The Headmaster may delegate the investigation of a Prep complaint to the Head of School (Prep), Head of Pre-Prep or another appropriate senior member of staff, provided that person has not been directly involved in the matters complained about. The Headmaster remains responsible for determining the formal response to the complaint.

Receipt of the formal complaint will be acknowledged within 24 hours during term time and normally within five working days during School holiday periods. The Headmaster, or delegated person, will investigate the complaint and may meet with the parents and interview relevant members of staff or pupils. Written records will be kept of meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the relevant facts have been established, the Headmaster will inform parents of the findings and decision in writing, giving reasons for the decision. This will normally be provided within 28 term-time working days of the start of the Stage 2 process. Where this is not possible, parents will be informed of the reason and given a revised timescale.

A complaint about the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Trustees. Where the complaint concerns the Headmaster, the Chair of Trustees, or a Trustee nominated by the Chair, will undertake the functions assigned to the Headmaster under Stage 2 of this procedure.

5. Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Independent School Standards – Part 7, paragraphs 33(f)–(i)

Where parents remain dissatisfied following Stage 2, they may request a Panel Hearing by writing to the Chair of Trustees.

The Chair of Trustees will convene a panel consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of the Panel will be independent of the management and running of the School.

The School will make reasonable arrangements to facilitate the parents' attendance at the Panel Hearing. Parents may attend and be accompanied by one other person, such as a relative or friend. Legal representation will only be permitted where the Chair considers this appropriate. If parents choose not to attend, the Panel Hearing will nevertheless proceed in accordance with this procedure and the Panel will consider the complaint on the information available.

The Panel will consider the complaint and may undertake or request further investigation where necessary. It will make findings and recommendations and will communicate its decision and reasons to the parents in writing, normally within seven working days of the Panel Hearing.

The Panel's findings and recommendations will be provided in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Trustees and, where relevant, the person complained about. They will also be made available for inspection on the School premises by the Headmaster and Trustees. The decision of the Panel will be final.

6. Recording, Monitoring and Confidentiality

Independent School Standards – Parts 6, 7 and 8

The School will keep a written record of all complaints made under the formal procedure, including whether they were resolved at Stage 2 or proceeded to a Panel Hearing, and any action taken by the School as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint was upheld.

Records of formal complaints will be retained for a minimum of seven years, subject to any longer retention period required by the School's records retention arrangements. Complaints and their outcomes will be reviewed regularly by senior leaders to identify any patterns, trends or areas for improvement.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required by law or where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the academic year 2025–26 was 0.

7. Data Protection Complaints

Data Protection Act 2018, section 164A; Independent School Standards – Part 7

Where a complaint concerns the handling of personal data, the School will also comply with the applicable requirements of data protection legislation. This includes facilitating the making of a data protection complaint, acknowledging it within 30 days, investigating it without undue delay and communicating the outcome promptly. Data protection complaints should also be notified to the School's Data Protection Officer in accordance with the School's Privacy Notice.

8. Monitoring and Review

Independent School Standards – Parts 6, 7 and 8

This policy is reviewed annually and whenever there is a significant change to relevant legislation, statutory guidance or School practice.

The policy is published on the School website and is available in hard copy or an accessible format on request.