

## Complaints Procedure

### Guidance for Parents

#### **If you have a concern or complaint:**

The British Section Staff would like you to tell them about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school and want to know if you have any concerns - most of which can usually be resolved by speaking to the right person. You may well find that the Primary &/or Secondary Forum meetings each term provide the opportunity to air your views and listen to other parents' thoughts. Staff presentations and discussions at these Forums are well-received and tend to address many of the frequently-asked questions that parents naturally share at the various levels in the school life.

However, should you have a specific complaint, which you would like to be dealt with confidentially, efficiently, sensitively and at the appropriate level, this Complaints Procedure is designed to deal with it. No matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for you and your child in the British Section will not be affected in any way.

Given the unusual system of which the British Section is part, there are many aspects of school life which remain the responsibility of the French head of school. There may be, therefore, certain issues, concerns or complaints which can only be dealt with by the *Provisieur, Principal* (for the 11-15 *collège* cycle) or *Directeur/Directrice* (in the case of Primary and Nursery) and their senior administrative team. British Section staff will indicate to you the limits of their responsibility and authority to respond in such cases, but will make every reasonable effort to help you bring your concern to the appropriate person in a timely manner.

#### **What to do first:**

Please tell us of your concern / complaint as soon as possible; it is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.. You are very welcome to come in to see members British Section Staff either at the end of school or by appointment which can be most easily fixed through the British Section Office (01 34 51 62 64). In a genuinely urgent case, the Head of the British Section or another senior member of staff will, of course, do their best to make themselves available to see you as a priority.

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking to the relevant member of staff. But finding the right person is not always straightforward. Our guidance is as follows:

- If your concern relates to your child's progress in a British Section subject, contact either the British Section class or subject teacher, or (*as the case may be*) the Head of Primary, Mrs Annie Divaret-Hepburn, or one of the two Deputy Heads of Secondary (Mr Nicholas Baker and Mr David Jackson, responsible respectively for Language/Literature and History/Geography). A meeting should be arranged within 10 working days
- If your concern relates to your child's general progress, or is related to a pastoral or personal matter, contact (*as the case may be*) the Head of Primary, Mr Baker (if your child is on the Lycée International site), Mr Roger Stephens (for the *Collège Pierre et Marie Curie*) or Miss Xana Jones (for the *Collège des Hauts Grillets*). A meeting should be arranged within 5 working days
- If you feel that your concern/complaint warrants immediate attention at the most senior level please contact the British Section Head, Philip Shaw-Latimer. A meeting should be arranged within 48 hours

It is usually better to discuss problems face to face. British Section staff members will make every effort to resolve the problem quickly and informally. They will make every reasonable effort to ensure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to you. They will ask what action you would like the British Section to take. Of course, this does not mean that in

every case they will come round to your point of view, or even achieve a satisfactory outcome, but it will help both you and the **British Section** understand both sides of the issue. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

**If you are still concerned:**

If you are not satisfied with the teacher's response you can make a formal complaint, which must be in writing, to the Head who will ask to meet you to discuss the problem. A meeting should be arranged within 48 hours. You may take a friend with you if you wish. A senior member of staff will be asked to investigate the complaint fully and this may involve interviewing any members of staff or pupils involved. You will receive a written response to your complaint.

However, if your complaint is about an action of the Head personally, then you should refer it in writing to the President of the British Section Parents Association. The current President is Mr Richard Hadley.

**If you are still not satisfied:**

Normally the problem should be resolved by this stage. But if you are still not satisfied you may wish to refer your formal complaint to the governing body. You should write to the President of the **British Section Parents Association** (*whose name, by the way, can always be found on the BSPA website or can be requested at the BS office*) who is the governor designated by the governing body to deal with complaints. At this stage your complaint will not be made known to the other governors. This is because it may be necessary to hold a formal hearing of your complaint and we would not want other governors to be prejudiced.

If the President is unable to find a way forward or resolve the matter, or was involved at the earlier stage because the complaint related to the Head, your complaint will then be heard by a panel of three Governors of whom at least one will be an independent (*non-parent*) Governor. You will be invited to attend the panel meeting, accompanied by a friend if you wish, and to put your side of the matter. The Head will also attend. The decision of the panel will be binding on the **British Section and the British Section Parents Association**.