

Holiday Activities Standard Operating Procedure		Section:	VA 15.4
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Title : CUSTOMER COMPLAINT	Approved by:	JW + DC + JB	
Relevant Forms:			

This policy establishes procedures for making a complaint and is posted on the Leisure Centre's website (www.sylvestrian-leisure.co.uk) with a hard copy available on request for present or prospective parents. The policy is reviewed annually.

If you have any concern about any aspect of your son's or daughter's life within our Leisure Centre, please contact an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible. We take all expressions of concern seriously and follow them up promptly. We realise that things can go wrong and we want to be able to sort them out.

Sometimes parents and pupils are reluctant to express concern because:

- They fear that the Leisure Centre will not see the issue to be important. If it is important to you, it should be important to us.

- They fear there may be repercussions for the child. This should not be a factor. The Leisure Centre is here for you and your child. The leisure Centre will not discriminate against a child because of expressions of concern or complaints. We are also experienced in ensuring that, if other children are involved (eg in a case of bullying), there are no repercussions from other quarters.

For us to deal with a problem we need to know about it, and sooner rather than later. It is our hope that most problems can be dealt with at least initially on an informal basis, but if not you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Leisure Centre Manager. Ultimately you may take your complaint to a panel convened by the Governing Body.

This will depend on the nature and seriousness of the concern, but the following is a guide:

- For a minor day-to-day matter the right person is likely to be the Duty Manager or Camp Co-ordinator for Holiday Activities. Resolved or unresolved, entries need to be made within the Complaint log. This will be completed by the Holiday Activities Coordinator.

- Major issues should come straight to the Duty Manager or Centre Manager.

We will always aim to deal with your concern as quickly as possible, bearing in mind that it is likely to involve investigation and consultation with others. Resolved or unresolved, entries need to be made within the Complaint log. This will be completed by the Holiday Activities Coordinator.

If you feel that an expression of concern has not been handled properly, or if a resolution has not been reached within 7 working days, please contact the Leisure Centre Manager in writing. I will ask to meet you within 7 working days of receiving the complaint and respond in writing as soon as is practicable following a full investigation of the matter. I will keep a written record of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved between us or proceed to a panel hearing.

In the case of complaints received relating to pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a record of complaints is kept for three years. Parents of pupils in the EYFS may contact Ofsted (0300 1234234) and ISI (020 7600 0100), and may make a complaint to Ofsted and ISI if they so wish.

Complainants will be notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of the Leisure Centre having received the complaint. The Leisure Centre will provide Ofsted and ISI, on request, with a written record of all the complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

What happens if you wish to take it further?

If subsequently you remain unhappy and feel that your concerns have not been fully and fairly considered, then you may wish to contact the Bursar of the School (Forest School).

Referral to the Bursar

Once a parent has contacted the Bursar will call for a report from the Leisure Centre Manager and any relevant documents. On the basis of this she may seek further briefings from individual members of staff.

The Bursar may be able to resolve the matter to the parent's satisfaction. If the parent remains dissatisfied the Bursar may offer a meeting.

Meeting with the Bursar (or another Governor acting as her nominated representative)

If a meeting is requested the Bursar offers a meeting at a mutually convenient time, where possible within 7 working days of the parents taking up the offer. Those involved are:

- the Bursar
- the Leisure Centre Manager and at most one other member of staff;
- the parent(s)

The parents are invited to bring a friend who is not involved with the complaint. Legal representation is not appropriate at this stage. The Bursar may be able to find a resolution. If this is not possible and the parents wish to take the matter further, it should be referred to the Governors' Conciliation Panel.

Referral to the Conciliation Panel

The Panel is established as follows:

- the Convenor is a Governor who has not already met the parents for an earlier meeting relating to the complaint.
- the Panel will in all cases consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
- one member of the Panel will not be a Governor and will also be independent of the strategic and day-to-day management of the School; he or she will also not be an employee of the School.

The Chairman of Governors refers the matter to the Conciliation Committee and invites the Convenor to call a meeting within 14 working days of the referral.

The Bursar has no further involvement until the Convenor reports back at the end of the Committee's deliberations.

Meeting with the Conciliation Panel

Those involved in the meeting are:

- the Conciliation Panel as detailed above.
- the Leisure Centre Manager and possibly a key member of staff.

- the parents, who are invited to bring a supportive friend. As for the meeting with the Chairman of Governors, legal representation is not appropriate.

The parents and the Leisure Centre manager are asked in advance whether there are any papers to be considered at the meeting. The papers are copied and distributed before the meeting.

The Convenor emphasises that he or she is concerned to reach a positive conclusion and invites first the parents, then the Leisure Centre Manager to speak. After this the Convenor encourages questions and general discussion.

The Convenor may request that the Leisure Centre Manager, the parents and their friend withdraw from the discussion for a time, leaving the Panel alone.

If a positive outcome is reached, the Convenor will summarise the outcome and confirm the nature of the agreement. This will be recorded, copied and circulated as soon as possible.

At the end of the Panel's deliberations, the Convenor makes a full report to the Chairman of Governors and informs the parents that this is being done. The Chairman would be expected to endorse the Panel's decision. The report will be completed within 7 working days of the hearing. A copy of these findings and recommendations is sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and the Leisure Centre Manager.

Further Action

If agreement is not reached and if a complaint cannot be resolved within the School, the parents can choose to consult a lawyer and/or to contact a third party.

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 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

All written records will be kept for a minimum of three years.

Complaints relating to child protection will be investigated in lines with our safeguarding policy and procedure.

Complaints relating to alleged criminal activities will require us to inform the local police authority.