

Parkgate House School

Parent Handbook

2013 - 2014

CONTENTS

ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE	2
ASSESSMENT AND ACGS.....	2
BALLET / MODERN DANCE	3
BULLYING	3
CHOIR.....	2
CLUBS.....	3
COMPLAINTS.....	3
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	3
CURRICULUM.....	3
DIARY	3
DISCIPLINE.....	3
DOGS.....	3
ESSENTIAL ITEMS	4
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	4
FEES	4
FIXTURES – INTER-SCHOOL COMPETITIONS	4
FRIDAY AFTERNOON.....	4
GIFTED AND TALENTED.....	4
HAIR.....	5
HANDWRITING/PRESENTATION.....	5
HEAD LICE.....	5
HOUSE SYSTEM.....	5
ILLNESS GUIDE	6
INSPECTION.....	6
JEWELLERY.....	6
KARATE	6
LUNCHES	6
MAKE UP AND NAIL POLISH.....	6
MID-MORNING BREAK.....	6
MINIBUS.....	7
MONEY	7
MUSIC	7
NAME TAPES.....	7
NATIONAL CURRICULUM	7
UPDATE.....	7
EDUCATIONAL VISITS.....	7
PARENTMAIL.....	7
PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS	8
PARTY DAYS.....	7
PASTORAL CARE	8
PERSONAL PROPERTY.....	8
PHOTOGRAPHS.....	8
PLAYGROUND	8
POLICIES	8
PREP (Homework)	9
PARENTS' COMMITTEE.....	9
RECORDERS	10
REPORTS	10
RULES AND REGULATIONS	10
SENIOR SCHOOLS 11+.....	10

SCHOLARSHIPS.....	10
SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES.....	10
STAFF LIST AND STAFFING.....	10
SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN	11
SWIMMING.....	11
TERM DATES.....	11
TIMES OF SCHOOL DAY	11
TOYS.....	11
TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL.....	11
UNIFORM	12
VALUABLES.....	12
WEBSITE	12
WET WEATHER COLLECTION	12
APPENDICES	13
APPENDIX 1	14
APPENDIX 2	15

Welcome to Parkgate House School

Parent Handbook

We have compiled this Parent Handbook to offer a comprehensive guide to our school. Please read through it carefully and keep it handy for future reference. If there are any areas you would like us to include please do get in touch: office@parkgate-school.co.uk

School Ethos:

Parkgate offers a happy, secure and stimulating environment where boys and girls are given the opportunity to develop each and every talent. Pupils are encouraged to develop self-esteem and confidence through a nurturing and sensitive teaching approach based on individual needs. The school is supported by a team of dedicated specialist teachers who, in addition to teaching core subjects to their individual classes, use their enthusiasm and individual subject knowledge for the benefit of the whole school. The result is high overall standards across the curriculum with particular emphasis on high standards in numeracy and literacy, complimented by a broad spectrum of extra curricular pursuits in the creative arts and sporting activities.

We are a small school with a strong educational ethos. It is the size of this school that gives it unique strengths. The staff here is able to get to know each child just that little bit better than is ever possible in somewhere twice or three times the size. Perhaps even more importantly, we can adapt what we do to suit the individual child. It is a huge advantage that Parkgate House School has the size, the mind set and ability to be so flexible. Our emphasis is on individual excellence be it academic, artistic or sporting.

We at Parkgate House School are demanding. We expect the children to succeed. Our children are academically able and more importantly willing and keen to develop their skills in all areas of the curriculum and to develop beyond the usual remit of a school. We encourage children to respond to the high standards and challenges set.

Contact Details:

Parkgate House School
80 Clapham Common Northside
London
SW4 9SD

Tel: +44 (0)20-7350-2452

Fax: +44 (0)20-7738-1633

Admissions: +44 (0)20-7350 2461

Principal: Miss Catherine Shanley

Headmaster: Mr Malcolm McKinlay

Gable House, 239 Regents Park Road, London N3 3LF
020 83715000

ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE

Attendance and punctuality are of great importance and can impact hugely on the quality and productiveness of a child's education. Being in school on time ensures pupils begin their day feeling settled and that they do not miss out on important curriculum time. Arriving late can be disruptive for the whole class and can impact significantly on how well a child settles.

Our Attendance and Punctuality Policy can be found online on our school website www.parkgate-school.co.uk under the Parent Pages section, School Policies. The main points have been summarised below:

- If your child is absent from school please contact the school office via telephone or email to inform us of the reason.
- An absence can only be authorised for a legitimate reason, for example illness, appointment etc
- Absence of leave during term time is actively discouraged. Should this be necessary (for holiday or other events), parents must *request permission* from Miss Shanley via letter or email. They will receive written confirmation as to whether their request has been authorised.
- Repeated absence will be monitored and followed up, to limit the impact on the pupil's education.
- Registration time is from **8.30-9am** for Pre-Prep and **8.30-8.45am** for Prep. If a pupil arrives after the registration period they will be marked as late. Late arrivals in Pre-Prep will be marked as late by the class teacher up until 9.10am when the register is closed. Any pupil arriving after 9.10am for Pre-Prep and 8.45am for Prep, must report to the school office and will be marked in the register as late.
- Should a pupil arrive late for school 3 times within a week or 8 times within a half term, a letter will be sent home detailing this matter. Should the concern over punctuality continue, a meeting will be arranged to discuss this matter further. For any child arriving after 9.30am, their lateness becomes an absence in need of a legitimate reason for it to be authorised.
- Any pupil arriving late or being picked up early for an appointment, should sign in/out at the school office.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Pupils at Parkgate House School are expected to work hard and the school have a written policy on the curriculum and how this will be delivered. A copy of this policy is available from the school office. Senior school examination results are published at the end of the Spring Term and past successes are available from the school office.

ASSESSMENT AND ACGS

The progress of the pupils throughout the school is monitored on a regular basis through formal and informal assessments. These take the form of Foundation Profile in Nursery and Reception through to NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) Cognitive Ability Tests in PP2 – P6. Across the Curriculum Grades will be issued to all pupils in P4 – P6 half-termly. Full details of the Assessment Programme in the school can be found in the school's Assessment Policy, available from the School Office.

BALLET / MODERN DANCE

These are offered as curriculum subjects for pupils throughout the school. In the Nursery Department all pupils participate in ballet lessons; in the rest of the school it is only girls. Please see the school uniform list for details of the kit requirements.

BULLYING

No form of bullying, either physical or mental, is tolerated. Should any form of bullying be brought to the attention of any member of staff, the Headmaster and Principal will take the required action and parents will be contacted. Please see the school policy on Bullying which refers closely to the **DfES Guidance "Bullying: don't suffer in silence"**.

CHOIR

The school choir is open to members of the school from the Prep Department and by invitation only. There is a rehearsal once a week after school.

CLUBS

A full programme of clubs runs every term with different choices each term. The lists will be posted on the board in the Entrance Hall to the school on the first day of school and places are on a first come, first served basis. Clubs do not run in the first and last week of term.

COMPLAINTS

A complaints procedure exists for parents who wish to make a complaint against the school or one of its staff. Please see Appendix 2.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please inform the school office of any changes to contact and emergency information.

CURRICULUM

Topics for the curriculum areas are sent home at the beginning of each term in the start of term letter which will also include additional relevant information for the term.

DIARY

A termly diary of meetings and events is published and sent home prior to commencement of the term. It is essential that parents study this carefully and note relevant dates.

DISCIPLINE

The highest standards of discipline are expected from all pupils at all times. Pupils are reminded regularly of the appropriate school rules and, at the same time, are encouraged to develop a strong code of self-discipline. Manners, courtesy and consideration for others should be impressed upon the children's minds. The school's Discipline and Suspension and Exclusion Policies are available from the school office.

DOGS

Whilst we appreciate that most dogs are sociable and friendly, occasionally we have children who are unsure of unknown dogs and therefore we would request that dogs are not left unattended in the playground.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

The school provides each child with textbooks and exercise books. However, the following additional items are required to be purchased as compulsory extras.

Recorder	(P3 – P6)
Fountain pen	(P3 – P6)
Berol Notewriter	(P3)
Pencils, eraser and ruler	(P3 – P6)
A set of good quality coloured pencils	(P3 – P6)
Pencil Sharpener	(P3 – P6)
Glue Stick	(P3 – P6)

Children in the Pre-Prep are provided with the appropriate writing and colouring implements.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An activity and sports week are generally offered in the first week of the holidays. Further details will be issued by the school office.

FEES

The fees stated in the prospectus include all tuition, books and equipment and a mid-morning snack.

Extras, which include individual music tuition, some outings and small essential items are charged separately and are listed under the appropriate paragraph headings. Clubs will incur a charge, which will be clearly shown on the Activities Sheet.

FIXTURES – INTER-SCHOOL COMPETITIONS

Pupils from PP2 upwards take part in fixtures in a variety of sports throughout the year. We are keen to encourage parental support and welcome you to matches at home or away. Fixtures lists are published in advance and placed on the notice-board by the main entrance.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

In order to allow an early departure for those going out of London on a Friday afternoon, the school day finishes at 2.30pm for Reception – Prep 6 and 3.30pm for the afternoon Nursery Session. Please note that Sports Club takes place on Friday afternoons should pupils wish to stay later.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Our aim at Parkgate House School is to discover and develop each and every child's natural talents and, at the same time, ensure that all children are achieving their full potential. With this in mind our flexible teaching programme, both in content and style of teaching, enables us to cater for the most able of children.

We aim to create an atmosphere that allows children to go as far and as fast as they are able. Provision for the Gifted and Talented child is made in a variety of ways through expectation, extension, differentiation and planning. We have set a programme of screening and standardised tests from Reception (4+) upwards. This provides objective, reliable evidence of progress and potential, which supports the intuitive knowledge of members of staff. All results are discussed within school, when individual learning programmes may be devised, taking into account both the ability and age of the child. A school policy is available on request.

HAIR

Long hair must be tied back. Only purple or green hair ribbons are permitted and no child may wear fancy slides or clips. Boys' hair should be neat and not fall into the eyes.

HANDWRITING/PRESENTATION

The school has a clearly defined Handwriting policy and handwriting lessons are incorporated into English lessons. Writing, up to the age of seven, is in pencil and the use of a fountain pen is introduced during Prep 3.

Please encourage your child to develop a legible style of writing and, at the same time, help them to present work to the highest possible standards of neatness at all times.

It is important that, during these formative years, children learn to work at speed without sacrificing neatness and presentation. When errors occur the children should be encouraged to cross out neatly and not re-write every piece of work (although this may be necessary occasionally!) Please note that we do not allow the use of ink eradicators and these should not be brought into school.

HEAD LICE

It is essential that each child's hair is checked regularly. In the event that head lice are found, please treat your child accordingly and inform the school.

If a child is found to have lice, parents will be contacted and asked to treat the condition immediately. We do ask for your co-operation regarding this matter. The school reserves the right to carry out spot inspections as required.

HOUSE SYSTEM

In Reception (Summer Term) the children will be allocated a house in which they will remain until the end of Prep 6. Siblings will be placed in the same house. The houses are as follows:

- Egyptians - House colour Yellow
- Romans - House colour Red
- Greeks - House colour is Green
- Aztecs - House colour is Blue

The aim of the house system is to give the children a sense of responsibility, to promote academic excellence and to allow them to be 'part of a team'. It is also used to promote a sense of unity and to encourage proper conduct throughout the school.

Merits are awarded to individual children for their houses. These are given for good conduct in the playground and within the school, as well as academic work including homework. The children

must receive 5 merits to earn 1 house point for their team. Merits are also awarded to the teams as a whole during school events, such as Sports Day and Swimming Gala.

Each house has a Captain and Vice Captain whose role it is to encourage team spirit. The captains are also involved in the administration of the House System. They are elected by the school at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

A record of merits will be kept. Certificates will be awarded when the children earn a certain amount of house points. These certificates will be presented to the children during Friday Assemblies.

Bronze Award = 10 House Points

Silver Award =20 House Points

Gold Award =30 House Points

Principal's Award =50+ House Points at end of school year

ILLNESS GUIDE

Please do not bring a child to school that is unwell. If children have diarrhoea or sickness, please keep them at home for at least twenty four hours as these ailments spread quickly amongst young children. Please inform the school office if your child is suffering from Chicken pox, shingles or German measles or any other notifiable infection.

INSPECTION

The school is regularly inspected by OFSTED and a copy of the most recent report is available from the school office.

JEWELLERY

The wearing of a watch and one pair of plain studs in pierced ears is allowed. We strongly recommend that, when watches are purchased, they should be of the non-digital type. Watches must be named. Watches should not be worn during sports.

KARATE

Boys in Pre-Prep 1 upwards will have Karate once a week.

LUNCHES

Organic lunches are provided by the school. Throughout the year, there is a main course, a dessert/fresh fruit. Meals are of high quality with emphasis on a healthy diet.

It is expected that all children will take a cooked meal as special dietary requirements can be catered for e.g. vegetarians. Children may bring a packed lunch.

MAKE UP AND NAIL POLISH

No make-up or nail polish is allowed.

MID-MORNING BREAK

An organic snack is provided in the mid-morning break and this cost is included in the fees. Children are encouraged to drink water and this is available throughout the day.

MINIBUS

The school minibus is used by children of all ages. It is fully equipped with seat belts and all the required safety precautions, including a mobile telephone.

MONEY

Children are discouraged from bringing money into school. Should they be required to bring money for any reason it must be in a sealed envelope stating the child's name and form and the purpose of the money. It should be handed to the appropriate member of staff upon arrival.

MUSIC

Music plays an important part in the life of the school. All children are given ample opportunity to participate in musical activities.

Individual instrumental tuition is available at an additional charge. Lessons are arranged on a rota basis throughout the week. If you would like your son/daughter to learn a musical instrument, please contact the school office. Half a term's notice is required if instrumental music lessons are to be given up. Please give written notification to the school office.

NAME TAPES

All items of school uniform must be clearly labelled.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM

We are an independent school and therefore do not have to follow the National Curriculum. However, from the age of five our curriculum takes account of the content of the National Curriculum but in many cases goes further. At the end of Prep 5 and into Prep 6 attention is given to Senior School examination requirements and this forms the basis of the curriculum.

UPDATE

Twice a term a newsletter, "Parkgate Update", is sent home to parents with information and pictures of the activities and events the pupils have enjoyed.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Educational visits are arranged for all age groups during the year. These are linked to the curriculum focus and will include follow up class work. The school takes very seriously the issue of safeguarding and promoting the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school safety and have drawn up a comprehensive policy for staff regarding the organisation of school visits. We have referred very closely to **DFE Guidance "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits"**. Our policy is available from the school office. Details of the visit including costs are communicated to parents prior to the visit.

PARENTMAIL

The school uses ParentMail to distribute correspondence to parents via e-mail. It is also used in special circumstances to send parents text messages with relevant information, for example informing them of the late return of a school trip. A ParentMail account registration letter is sent out to all new parents prior to the start of term.

PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS

They take the form of appointments in the Spring Term and Summer Term with the Form Teacher and other subject teachers but parents are most welcome to come and discuss their child's work at any time, either with the Headmaster or the Form Teacher. When problems are observed in school, parents will automatically be invited to come and discuss the problem and possible solutions. Lists for appointments are posted either outside the classroom or on the table in the entrance hall. Parents are asked to sign up for appointments and to arrive promptly. Parents are asked, whenever possible, to use these evenings for appointments, as requests for meetings at any other time cannot be guaranteed.

PARTY DAYS

The last day of term is party day and the children will be asked to contribute something towards the party. A list of suitable food will be posted on the classroom door prior to the event. Children will be allowed to wear their home clothes for these events. Please be aware that due to allergies food sent into school should not contain nuts.

PASTORAL CARE

The school aims to provide a happy, caring environment for all children. The Form Teacher is the key link between home and school and any problems, however small, should be referred to them immediately. The Prep book is one method available for communication with the Form Teacher. The Headmaster is always available to see parents. Emphasis is placed on learning to live together and on the need for kindness and consideration for others. We hope your child settles happily and quickly into school life and grows in confidence and maturity day by day. Each year the school operates a virtues programme where a virtue is presented to the children once a fortnight, coupled with an assembly presented by a member of staff. Children deemed to have demonstrated the virtue in question will be awarded a certificate. The Golden Tree operates in a similar way in the Nursery Department.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

All items of personal property must be clearly named. The school cannot be held responsible for any item, which is lost in school.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Class and siblings photographs are taken in the first half of the Autumn Term. There is a full school photograph on Clapham Common in the Summer Term. The school photographs are available for purchase and details are issued by the school office. Events such as school concerts and music evenings are recorded, put onto DVDs and offered for sale through the school.

PLAYGROUND

Children are encouraged to use a bicycle or scooter to travel to school but these must not be used inside the school grounds. Please ensure that all bicycles and scooters are stored safely and are not causing an obstruction. Personal property left on school grounds is entirely at the owner's risk. Please also ensure that siblings are fully supervised whilst in the playground when dropping off and collecting.

POLICIES

The following school policies are available from the School Office:

Curriculum Subject Policies

English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Religious Education, PSHE, ICT, Music, Art & Design, Drama, Physical Education, French, Latin & Classics

Pastoral Policies

Discipline, Presentation, Assessment, Differentiation, Teaching & Learning, Curriculum, English as an Additional Language, Display, Equal Opportunities, Anti-bullying, Feedback & Marking, Homework (Prep), Special Educational Needs, Attendance, Gifted & Talented, Foundation Stage, EY Profile, Suspension & Exclusion Policy.

School Administration & H&S Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection (including E-safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use), Health & Safety, Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits & Activities, First Aid, Recruitment & Selection, Admissions and Attendance, Complaints, DDA.

PREP (Homework)

Children in the Reception may do a small amount of prep set at the discretion of the class teacher. Children in PP1 will have reading and a small amount of prep with a week to complete it. Children in PP2 will have prep three times a week. Children in Prep 3 – Prep 6 have prep set each evening.

P3	-	a maximum of 30 minutes Monday – Thursday; 60 minutes Friday
P4	-	a maximum of 30 minutes Monday – Thursday; 60 minutes Friday
P5	-	a maximum of 40 minutes Monday – Thursday; 60 minutes Friday
P6	-	a maximum of 50 minutes Monday – Thursday; 60 minutes Friday

Pupils in Prep 3 and above have a Prep diary. The purpose of this diary is to keep parents in touch with the work that is being done and we ask parents to inspect the diary regularly and sign it at the end of each week. Please see the homework policy in the appendix.

PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The aim of the Parents' Committee is to organize enjoyable events for parents, children and staff alike, whilst fundraising for some wonderful charities adopted by the school.

The Committee represents a good cross-section of the school, with children in various classes from Nursery to Prep 6.

- **Charity Events**

During the school year, the Committee organizes a variety of functions to raise money for charity and for the school. In the past they have held Wine Tasting Evenings, Daffodil Competitions, Teddy Bears' Picnics and Charity Cricket matches. The Committee works hard to try to make these events successful and they are always great fun.

- **Uniform Sales**

Approximately, once a term, the Committee holds a school uniform sale. It is a good opportunity to pick up some spare items of uniform, as well as to clear out unwanted uniform from parents' cupboards.

RECORDERS

Children in Prep 3 and above learn the recorder. All children are required to purchase a recorder and ten minutes practice is required each evening.

REPORTS

Detailed individual reports for all pupils are sent home in the Autumn Term and Summer Term.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

We keep these to the absolute minimum.

- Pupils should not be absent from school without permission
- All pupils are expected to respect their own, the school's and other people's property and to look after books and equipment
- Pupils are expected to be well behaved, well mannered and attentive
- All pupils must present a clean and tidy appearance
- School uniform is compulsory
- Hair touching the shoulders should be tied back
- Pupils must wear the prescribed footwear, unless there is a medical reason why they may not
- Work, including prep, must be handed in at the correct time
- Sweets, food or money (unless specifically permitted) should not be brought to school
- Pupils must report to the office if arriving late and if leaving school early
- No pupil will be allowed to leave by themselves at the end of the day without the written permission of her parents or guardian

SENIOR SCHOOLS 11+

By the age of eleven the pupils are prepared for a variety of secondary schools, both day and boarding. Advice is given on schools and procedures for entry. A meeting for all P5 parents will be arranged in the Spring Term.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In supporting our commitment to excellence and high standards, "The John Andrew Shanley" Academic Scholarship and "The Hanora" Music Scholarship were established in 1996. The academic scholarship involves the following: an English Paper, a Mathematics Paper and a Reasoning Paper. Musicians applying for the music scholarship are requested to play an instrument, sing and complete an oral theory examination. Invitations to sit for the scholarship examinations are sent out in the Autumn Term.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Pupils are closely monitored during their time in the School and any child suspected of having a difficulty is assessed initially in school and if further advice is required an assessment with an Educational Psychologist is recommended. There is an additional charge for the formal assessment. If at any stage additional support is recommended then the school will create an Individual Educational Programme (IEP) for the particular pupil.

STAFF LIST AND STAFFING

The staff list is published on an annual basis. We have a very flexible approach to teaching which enables us to give individual and/or small group tuition when and where it is needed.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Nursery and Pre-Prep children may arrive from 8.30am – 9.00am. Prep children may arrive from 8.30am – 8.45am. During mid-morning break and the lunch-break the children are supervised in the playground.

SWIMMING

Pupils from Reception upwards receive a weekly Swimming lesson as part of the school's curriculum. Swimming lessons take place at the Latchmere Leisure Centre, Battersea. We believe the weekly swimming lessons to be extremely beneficial to all pupils. Their attendance on a weekly basis allows us to help them make progress and work towards achieving different awards and distance badges. If a child is unwell and not able to swim it will be likely that they are not well enough to attend school and will be absent. On the rare occasion where a child is well enough to attend school but unable to swim (due to a medical condition), parents must put this in writing and hand this into the school office. It is important that the school office receives this in writing so they can inform the swimming teachers. Pupils for whom we have received written confirmation that they are not to swim will still travel to the Latchmere Leisure Centre and will be accompanied by a teacher.

Please note that on the first day of the Autumn Term no swimming lessons take place; pupils swim as normal on the first day of the Spring Term and Summer Term according to their weekly timetable.

TERM DATES

Annual term dates are published two terms in advance, i.e. at the end of the Autumn Term the full academic year dates from the following September are sent home.

TIMES OF SCHOOL DAY

Nursery

Morning session 09.00am - 12.00 noon

Afternoon session 12.30pm - 3.30pm

Pre- Prep School Reception 09.00am - 3.15pm (Mon – Thurs)
2.30pm (Fri)

PP1 & PP2 09.00am 3.45pm (Mon - Thurs)
2.30pm (Fri)

Prep School 08.45am - 3.45pm (Mon; Weds)
4.45pm (Tues; Thurs)
2.30pm (Fri)

**Please note that the school is open from 0830am for pupils.
If children will be collected by someone other than the parent or caregiver please write the details in the notebook that is kept on the shelf to the left of the main door.**

TOYS

Children are discouraged from bringing precious toys to school. We allow a small toy/doll/teddy for the very young children in the nursery, as these may be a comfort.

TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL

Many children come to school on a bicycle or scooter. Please ensure that these are parked sensibly in the area provided and are not used in the school grounds when they may be a danger to the younger children.

UNIFORM

A Full List of the school uniform requirements is available on the school website and from the school office. Uniform may be purchased from Harrods.

VALUABLES

Children are strongly discouraged from bringing valuables to school. Any that are brought to school must be clearly named and are the responsibility of the child concerned.

WEBSITE

The school website carries a great deal of information about the school and all photographs from trips and events are available via the site. The address is: www.parkgate-school.co.uk

WET WEATHER COLLECTION

In the event of wet weather the children will be available for collection from either the lower floor of the school (ie Reception A & B and Cygnets) or the Coach House.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Structure of Parkgate House School

Appendix 2 Complaints Policy

APPENDIX 1

Parkgate House School

STRUCTURE

Parkgate House School offers continuous early education for children in the Nursery and the Pre-Prep. From the age of 7 upwards, pupils progress into the Preparatory School.

THE NURSERY DEPARTMENT

Our aim is to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and a wide variety of activities to help them develop their physical, cognitive and social skills. Research has shown that children who attend a nursery class achieve better at school. They are generally more socially confident, have improved powers of concentration and are more articulate. The Nursery has an activity area for free and directed play, a quiet area for pre-reading, writing and number work and an art area for art and craft activities. There is a playground for outdoor play and learning. Through play the children explore different experiences in differing situations. Play helps them increase their knowledge and understanding of mathematical, scientific and linguistic concepts, listening and speaking are fundamental to a young child's learning and a great deal of time is spent talking to the children. They are encouraged to sit and listen to stories, to respond to simple questions and discussion, to listen to their peers and to take turns in replying.

Firm foundations are laid for success and confidence in future reading, writing and number work by careful preparation of the elementary skills. Science, Art/craft, Music and physical play are part of the children's daily experience. Our curriculum covers all aspects of the Foundation Stage Profile specifically designed to offer a broad educational base for early years children. The Nursery staff work closely with the Pre-Prep teachers to ensure that every child's transition from nursery to school life is as happy and smooth as possible.

PRE-PREP DEPARTMENT

Reception (4+)
Prep 1 (5+)
Prep 2 (6+)

It is expected that there will be two forms per year group. Each form will be taught by a qualified teacher and there will also be a classroom assistant in the Reception class. There are specialist teachers for the following subjects: French; Music; Physical Education; Art; Ballet; Karate; Swimming.

PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Prep 3 (7+)
Prep 4 (8+)
Prep 5 (9+)
Prep 6 (10+)

The pupils in the Prep department will have a form teacher who is responsible for the administration of the form and teaching PSHE/RE. All other subjects are taught by specialists.

We follow the National Curriculum in the breadth and balance of our courses; however, we add many extra experiences and opportunities for learning to the basic requirements.

Pupils in Prep 5 and Prep 6 are offered a more diverse curriculum directed towards the Common Entrance requirements of Senior Schools.



Parkgate House School

Complaints Policy

SHARING CONCERNS

As part of the triangular relationship we maintain at Parkgate House School between pupils, parents and staff, we welcome suggestions and comments from all three groups. It is heartening to hear, from time to time, that our school is measuring up to, or even exceeding, parental expectations but it is also inevitable, despite everyone's best efforts, that sometimes things will go wrong. When this happens it is important that we are informed, so that we have a chance to put a situation right. This can be done by contacting the appropriate member of staff listed below or indeed any member of staff. Any complaint or query will be treated seriously and will be responded to. We hope that most will be resolved quickly and informally.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- Parents know how best to make their views known and to whom
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, courteously and efficiently
- It is clearly understood that any dissatisfaction or anxiety is taken seriously
- Action is taken where appropriate

HOW?

You can make an appointment to see any member of staff through the school's secretaries: Nicola Willis and Katherine Jubb. A message can also be left asking a member of staff to phone you. You may prefer to write a letter or to e-mail via: office@parkgate-school.co.uk

WHO?

Concerns about work and academic matters should be raised in the first instance with Form Teachers. In the Pre-Prep and Prep departments, writing a message in Homework Diaries is often a convenient way of establishing a dialogue. A Form Teacher may involve a Head of Department if appropriate.

Pastoral and disciplinary concerns should go to Heads of Department:

Head of Prep – Miss. Fiona Mangion
Head of Pre-Prep – Miss. Samantha Garland
Head of Nursery – Miss. Jill Meredith
Deputy Head – Miss. Louise Treherne

Other useful contacts:

Sport – Mr. Will Carew-Gibbs
Music – Miss. Emma Johnston
Health & Safety – Miss. Nicola Willis

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

We may be able to resolve problems raised face-to-face or by telephone immediately and informally, or it may be that further investigation is needed. In the latter case you will be given a date by which we shall contact you again.

It may be appropriate at this stage to ask you to come into school for a meeting. Experience suggests that many situations are far better dealt with in person than at a distance.

1. In the case of a more formal complaint the member of staff concerned will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. If for any reason you are not satisfied with the outcome of your communication with a member of staff you should contact the

School Secretary. Should the matter not be resolved within ten working days, or if the teacher and parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents may proceed by:

2. Writing to the Headmaster, Mr. Malcolm Mckinlay. In most cases he will wish to gather information and then meet with or speak to the parents concerned to discuss the matter, within ten working days of receiving their letter. It may be necessary for further investigation to take place and the Headmaster will keep written records of all related meetings and interviews.
3. Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, he will make a decision and inform parents in writing, giving reasons for his decision.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

Apart from the obvious need to discuss issues with those directly concerned, your complaint will be treated confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required by the school by paragraph 6(2) (j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

You should be absolutely clear that no complaint or issue raised with the school will ever impact adversely on any child and that we would take very seriously any breach of this principle.

In fairness to members of staff, only identified complaints will be pursued. Anonymous criticism will be disregarded except in the most exceptional circumstances.

OUTCOME

We hope that by following this procedure you will arrive at a satisfactory outcome, or at the least you will feel that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered. Whilst we shall do our best to accommodate your point of view, there may well be reasons why, for example, we are unable to make changes to our working practices. We recognise and acknowledge your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of all those in our care.

If, however, you are still not satisfied, the Headmaster will offer to refer the matter to a Complaints Panel. The Panel will consist of at least three people not directly involved in the matter of the complaint, appointed by the Headmaster, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. The Panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as possible and normally within fifteen working days.

The Panel may, if it is felt necessary, ask for further particulars of the complaint or any related matter in advance of the hearing from any of the parties. Copies of such particulars will be given to everyone no later than two working days prior to the hearing.

Parents may bring one other person to the hearing. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 2 days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster and Principal, the Panel and, where relevant, the person complained of.