



Introduction

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

As defined for the purposes of this Complaints Procedure, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about any particular aspect of the school's operation, which will be handled according to the procedure set out below. Written records of all complaints whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing will be kept for a period of three years.

This procedure is for the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage. This document is available on the school website, staff handbook, and in the boarding house.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Headmaster or Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Head of Department/the Deputy Head/the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved with the Form Teacher or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 3 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations. Complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of his decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a Governor, who has been appointed by the School Council to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed on the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the appointed Governor, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, a Panel will be formed which will consist of one member who is independent of the management and running of the school. The panel will decide how the further investigation 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 5 days of the Hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and Head Teacher.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 162A of

the 2002 Act requests access to them. A record of all complaints will be kept for at least 3 years.

Complainants have the right of appeal and should contact OFSTED as below.

Furthermore OFSTED and/or ISI may be contacted at any stage for assistance or advice. Their purpose is to monitor the educational and social well-being of school children. OFSTED can be contacted by email on enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk , by telephone on 0845 404045 or by letter at Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester M2 7LA. ISI can be contacted by telephone on 020 7600 0100.

Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils without unreasonable delay.

Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

Reviewed: Feb 2011 JRJ/PG
Next review: June 2012