

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Policy: Grievance - Parents**

#### **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 concern they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Policy.

#### **Policy Statement**

It is hoped that most concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. Parents can be assured that all concerns will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of 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.

#### **Responsibilities of the School**

##### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- If parents have a concern they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher/Tutor/Year Head. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher/Tutor/Year Head cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for him/her to consult with the relevant Head of School.
- Concerns made directly to a Head will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff unless it is deemed appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The member of staff receiving the concern will make a written record of all concerns and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within ten working days (term time) or in the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their concern in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

##### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

- If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their concern in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the concern, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases the Principal will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally within seven working days (term time) of receiving the concern to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations.
- The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the concern.
- Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in

writing. The Principal 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 the Governor who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- The appointed Governor will, prior to the panel being called, check that stages one and two have been duly completed and all findings of facts made.
- Once satisfied that stages one and two are complete, 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 matter detailed in 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 Governors. The 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 ten working days (term time).
- 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 seven working 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, 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 ten working days (term time) 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, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- An action plan will be developed, reviewed and implemented following the panel's conclusions.

### **Complaints against Senior Management**

- Complaints against a Head of School or the Bursar should be directed in writing to the Principal who will begin the investigation at level 2.

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- Complaints against the Principal should be directed in writing to the Chair of Governors who will begin the investigation.