

PARENTAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

The policy outlined below is to ensure that any party making a complaint can feel confident that there is someone in the school to whom they can turn who will treat the complaint seriously and in confidence. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or a perceived problem, however small. The Stages described in this policy give a step approach to resolving any complaint.

This Complaints procedure is available to all Parents of pupils and prospective pupils via the School's website and also on request from the School Secretary.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is our intention that we will respond to all issues of concern to parents quickly and informally and to the benefit of the pupils.

If parents have a concern they should contact their son/daughter's Form Tutor or Class Teacher. The Form Tutor or Class Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and the date on which they were received.

The School Secretary can help with advice on whom to contact. Boarding issues can be addressed by the Housemaster or Housemistress. He/She will make a written record of the concern together with the date of receipt.

In the Pre-Prep and EYFS all matters of concern can be addressed by the appropriate Class Teacher with the assistance, when felt necessary of the Headmistress of the Pre-Prep

In many cases, the matter can be resolved straightaway to the parents' satisfaction.

Should the matter not be resolved within 7 to 10 days of it being made known to the Form Teacher, Class Teacher or Housemaster/Housemistress and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the Form Tutor or Housemaster/Housemistress, in the Prep. School, or the Headmistress in the Pre-Prep will inform the Headmaster of the concern. The Headmaster will make himself available to discuss the concern informally with the parents.

In the event that the Headmaster and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the Headmaster will advise the parents to make a formal complaint in writing and to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of the Procedure

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

The Headmaster will meet and speak with the parents concerned within a reasonable amount of time, normally within 2 weeks, from receiving a written complaint, to discuss the matter.

The Headmaster will carry out further investigations as required.
If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headmaster 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 this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of the Procedure.

The procedure remains the same for the Pre-Prep. and EYFS.

Stage 3 – Consultation with the Chairman of the Governors

Where the parents are not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with Stage 2 of the Procedure then provision will be made for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

The panel will consist of one person who is independent of the management and running of the school.

Parents will be allowed to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing.

Provision for the panel to make findings and recommendations will be made and a copy of these findings and recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about within 28 days of the conclusion having been reached.

A copy of the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Headmaster.

Written records of all complaints will be kept.
In the Early Years Foundation Stage, record of complaints will be kept for at least three years

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.

As the School provides accommodation, we comply with Standard 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools by making the complaints procedure available to all staff, boarders and parents.

As stated in the Procedures, issues concerning Boarders will be addressed by the Housemaster/ Housemistress at the Informal Stage but if a satisfactory resolution is not reached then parents should follow the subsequent Stages as set out in the Procedures.

Pupils will not be penalised for voicing a concern or for making a complaint in good faith.

Any complaints about boarding or EYFS provision can taken to:

Ofsted - Tel. no.: 08456 404040

or

ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) - Tel no.: 020 7600 0100

Policy reviewed: September 2009 by R.D.Wesley, Deputy Headmaster

Policy updated in April 2010

Next review: September 2010 by R.D.Wesley, Deputy Headmaster

(Version 2)