

## P11 – Complaints Procedure

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The College has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents of current pupils do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the College in accordance with this procedure. The complaints procedure applies to past pupils only if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered, and it does not cover exclusions unless the school has indicated otherwise. Where referred to in this document a “working day” is considered to be a day when the school is in session.

### 2.0 STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- 2.1 It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 2.2 If parents have a concern they should normally contact the Tutor of their son or daughter. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the satisfaction of parents. If the Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult a member of the appropriate leadership team. If a concern is brought forward during the holidays, it will be recorded and forwarded to a senior member of staff.
- 2.3 Concerns made directly to a member of a leadership team will usually be referred to the relevant teacher unless the member of a leadership team deems it appropriate for him or her to deal with the matter personally.
- 2.4 The tutor or member of a leadership team will make a written record of all concerns and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved or in the event that the Tutor or member of a leadership team and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised that their complaint will be considered by the Head of the Junior School or the Deputy Head Academic or Deputy Head Pastoral, as appropriate. In most cases, this will involve a meeting to discuss the matter, which will normally be arranged within 5 working days of the concerns being forwarded.
- 2.5 When concerns are referred to the Head of the Junior School or the Deputy Head, they will review the concern and all remedial actions taken to try and resolve the matter. The outcome of this review will be a written response that will be communicated to the parent, normally within 5 working days of receipt of the concern. Should the parent feel that the matter is still not resolved then they will be advised to proceed with a complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

### **3.0 STAGE 2 – FORMAL RESOLUTION**

- 3.1 If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put a complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- 3.2 In most cases, the Headmaster will meet the parents concerned, normally within 5 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- 3.3 It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- 3.4 The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. These records will state whether the complaint is resolved following a formal procedure, or if it proceeds to a panel hearing.
- 3.5 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, normally within 15 working days of receiving the complaint. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- 3.6 If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure. The Headmaster will inform the Clerk to the Governors.

### **4.0 STAGE 3 – PANEL HEARING**

- 4.1 If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- 4.2 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 in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the College. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governing Body. The Clerk to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within 21 working days.
- 4.3 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 10 working days prior to the hearing.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint of the parents immediately without the need for further investigation.
- 4.6 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. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, within 15 working days. 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 Headmaster, all members of the Governing Body and where relevant, the person complained of.


4.7 Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints 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 an inspection of the College; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

4.8 The number of complaints registered under the formal procedures during the preceding academic year is available from the office of the Headmaster on request.

4.9 Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 working days. Although the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is responsible for inspecting the Early Years setting, parents should be aware that if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint concerning our Early Years provision, they are entitled to make a complaint directly to Ofsted. They can download the Ofsted leaflet: "Complaints to Ofsted about Schools: Guidance for Parents" reference 080113 from [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

4.10 Written records of complaints made are retained for three years. These records will include the actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint.

*NB School holiday periods are not classified as 'working days' and therefore delays may occur outside of term time.*

<b>Complaints Procedure</b>			
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