



# Serenity School

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## Complaints Procedure Policy

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## **Complaints Procedures**

It should be remembered that all complaints should be recorded on file.

### **PARENTAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Our School prides 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. The aim of this policy is to ensure that a complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level, and resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is good practice, it is fair to those concerned and it helps to promote parents' confidence in our ability to safeguard and promote welfare. We will try to resolve every concern in a positive way with the aim of putting right a matter which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing our systems and procedures in light of the circumstances.

Timescales: We aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner. Timescales for each stage are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. When we refer to Working Days, we mean Monday to Friday, when the School is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the School's website.

#### **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 the school office and ask to speak to any member of the senior leadership team. In many cases the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the senior member of staff cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult the Head of School.

We will acknowledge a written notification by telephone, e-mail or letter within two working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable in the holidays. A matter raised orally will not necessarily be acknowledged in writing.

Complaints made directly to the Head of School or a particular member of SLT will usually be referred to the relevant teacher unless the Head of School or SLT deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The senior leader responsible for the department/area of school will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within three weeks or in the event that the 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 of School. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head will meet the parents, carer concerned, normally within four working 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.

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 this decision in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.

Please note that any complaint received within two weeks of the end of term is likely to take longer to resolve owing to the presence of school holidays and the unavailability of personnel required for the investigation to be properly undertaken however an overall timeframe of three months for resolution will be enforced.

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 member of the Board of Governors appointed to request the Clerk to the Governors 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 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 Board of Governors - the Clerk to the Governors will then acknowledge the complaint within 2 working days and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within ten 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 two whole 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 days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing within one week to the parents, the Head, The Executive Headteacher, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about.

**Private proceeding:** A hearing before the Complaints Panel is a private proceeding. No notes or other records or oral statements about any matter discussed in or arising from the proceeding shall be made available directly or indirectly to the press or other media.

**Record Keeping and Confidentiality:** A written record will be kept of all complaints, and whether they were resolved following a formal procedure or by a panel hearing. They will also include the action taken by the School as a result of the complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). This record will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head of school. Records of complaints are maintained for three years after the pupil has left the school.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

## Appendix One: Complaint Form

### PARENTS/CARERS COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete and return to the Head of School who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your Name:	
Pupil's Name:	
Your relationship to the pupil:	
Address:	
Email address:	
Daytime phone number:	
Evening phone number:	
Mobile phone number:	
Please give details of your complaint:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve the complaint? Who did you speak to and what was the response?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details:	
Signature:	
Date:	
<b>School use only</b>	

Date acknowledgement sent:	
Who sent acknowledgement:	
Signature:	
Please complete the following, acknowledge the stages of the complaints procedure that have been followed and make any comments as necessary.	
Stage 1 (complaint heard by member of staff)	Date:  Signature:
Stage 2 (complaint heard by senior member of staff)	Date:  Signature:
Stage 3 (appeal heard by Board of Governors )	Date:  Signature;