

THE KING'S SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

March 2017

Introduction

The King's School endeavours to maintain and improve constantly the high quality of teaching, academic standards, pastoral care and extra-curricular programmes for which they have earned a good reputation. Consequently, the School aims to respond sensitively to parental complaints.

The following published procedure sets out both the process which the School expects parents to use to register any complaint and, similarly, the process which parents can expect the School to adopt in responding to any complaint.

Hebrews 12:1

Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

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 initially contact their son's/daughter's Class Teacher/Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher/Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a member of the leadership team.
- Complaints made directly to a member of the leadership team will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher/Tutor unless it is deemed appropriate to be dealt with initially at a higher level.
- The teacher handling the complaint 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 14 days or if the Class Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, the 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, the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher who will log it formally on a central log. If

necessary, the Headteacher will consider the complaint and decide the appropriate course of action to take.

- In most cases, your complaint will be acknowledged by telephone (and followed up in writing) normally within 24 hours of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays. The acknowledgement will indicate the action that is being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.
- In most cases, the Leadership Team will speak to the parents concerned, normally within three 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 Headteacher/Leadership team to carry out further investigations. The Headteacher/Leadership Team will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, if necessary she/he will meet with the parents again. A decision will then be made which will be communicated in writing, normally within a further 7 working days. Please note that as some staff are not available through the holiday period, the complaint may take longer to resolve at this time. The aim would always be to resolve within 28 days.
- For parents with children in Reception (EYFS settings)
Additional requirements apply for EYFS settings beyond those which apply to the main school. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they can request that the complaint (as written above) be referred to a Panel hearing - that being Stage 3 of this Procedure. This referral should be made in writing within 5 working days following the procedure below.
- In the event of a complaint against the Headteacher, or in the event of a complainant remaining dissatisfied, the matter should be referred formally to the Chairman of Governors who will then follow the above process.

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 Chairman of Governors, who is authorised by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. They will normally acknowledge receipt within 24 hours.

- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of two Governors not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and a third member who is entirely independent of the management and running of the school.
- Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of Governors. The Chairman of Governors, 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 working 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 3 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 14 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will advise the Chairman of Governors of their decision and she/he will write to the parents informing them of their decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel is final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headteacher, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy of those findings and recommendations are available for inspection on the school premises by the head teacher.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Parents may make request for the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except to the extent as required by paragraph 25(k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) 2010 that is where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requires access to them. In accordance with data protection principles, details of individual complaints will normally be retained only for as long as is considered to be reasonably necessary in the circumstances.

A record of all complaints, including EYFS, is kept for 3 years, to permit independent scrutiny by ISI of our handling of complaints. In addition, The King's School must provide Ofsted and ISI, on request with a written record of all complaints made during any specific period and the action taken as a result of each complaint. When we are notified of an Inspection, we will notify all of our parents, including EYFS. Once the final inspection report has been provided, we will supply it to parents of children, including all those within EYFS.

Parents may make separate complaint to the authorities that regulate us – those authorities are:

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House

9 - 12 Long Lane

London

EC1A 9HA

Telephone 020 7600 0100

Fax 020 7776 8849

OfSTED ask complaints to be registered through their contact form on their website– that is <http://live.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints/> Or email them at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Heather Bowden