

Complaints Procedure Policy

Kingshott has long prided 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.

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 their son or daughter's class teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for the Head of Pre-Prep and then the Headmaster to be consulted.
- Complaints made directly to the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant class teacher, unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.
- The class teacher 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 7 days, or in the event that the form teacher and parents 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 then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. After considering the complaint, the Headmaster will decide the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- 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 the parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to Mr Nigel Baker, Chairman of Governors, who has been appointed by 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 Chairman of Governors who, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 7 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 days prior to the hearing.

- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This could 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 that they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 7 days 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 Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- 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 the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Contact details

The Chair of Governors, Mr Nigel Baker may be contacted using the school address named below:

St. Ippolyts
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 7JX

Complaints registered under the formal procedure in the academic year 2008-2009 is 0.

I Gilmour
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