



Complaints Policy and Procedures

The Old School Henstead

Written by:	WJM
Last reviewed on:	9 September 2022
Next review due by:	9 September 2023

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES including EYFS

Introduction

The School 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. The Old School Henstead considers a formal complaint to be one which is dealt with through the formal complaints procedure.

Throughout this policy, any reference to action taken by the Headmaster also refers to any action taken by another senior member of staff deputising for the Headmaster. Any reference to action taken by the Chair of Governors also refers to action taken by a nominated Governor.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution of Complaints

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. The procedures in this document are not intended to limit the availability of the statutory complaints process.

- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/ daughter's Form teacher/tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher/tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head or the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher/tutor unless the Deputy Head or the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally, in order to resolve the matter informally.
- The Form teacher/tutor 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 five working days or in the event that the Form 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 Complaints.

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster, stating that the complainant wishes to escalate the matter to the formal stage. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. Under the ISSRs, the head will check with the complainant whether their communication is because they wish the Head to be aware or to seek his view, or if they wish to initiate the formal stage of the complaints process. 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 parents will be informed of this decision in writing within ten working days. 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 this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Formal Complaints

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), a formal written complaint is made to the Chair of Governors. They will be referred to a Convenor 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 Convenor. The Convenor, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within ten 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 five 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. The panel hearing will proceed, even if the parent subsequently decides not to attend, unless the parent indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further.

- 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 seven 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 about whom the complaint was made. Stage Three Complaints will be resolved within 28 days.
- 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 the Secretary of State, or where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

In the case of children in EYFS, parents may contact Ofsted or ISI using the following contact details should they wish to, if they believe that the school is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

Ofsted
Ofsted National Business Unit Royal Exchange Building
5th, 6th and 7th Floors Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone 0300 1234 666

Independent Schools Inspectorate CAP House
9 - 12 Long Lane
London

EC1A 9HA
Telephone 020 7600 0100

The school will:

- ensure that a record of complaints is kept for at least three years
- will notify complainants of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint
- will provide Ofsted and ISI, on request, with a written record of all formal complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint, regardless of whether they are upheld or not.

No formal complaints have been handled as per our complaints procedure during the last academic year.