

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Updated: October 2020

Ratified:



Introduction

The King's School endeavours to maintain and improve constantly the high quality of teaching, academic standards, pastoral care and extra-curricular programmes. We take all complaints seriously and endeavour to resolve them as quickly as possible.

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.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a minor concern or complaint they should initially contact their child's Class Teacher/Tutor. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher/Tutor cannot resolve the matter, they will then refer it to the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Team. Parents are also welcome to contact the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Team directly if they feel that would be more appropriate.
- The Headteacher or member of the Leadership Team will contact the parent as soon as possible, but within five working days, to discuss the complaint/concern and, if necessary, will arrange a meeting with them, in order to resolve the matter. In the unlikely event that this is not possible the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure. All correspondence and details of these meetings will be kept on file.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the issue will move to Stage 2. Parents should put their complaint formally in writing to the Headteacher who will log it formally in the Complaints and Concerns Log.
- In most cases, the complaint will be acknowledged by email or telephone normally within 24 hours of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays.
- The Headteacher will speak to the parents concerned, normally within three days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter, and arrange a meeting if necessary. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If requested a member of the Governing Body may be involved at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Headteacher/Governor to carry out further investigations. The Headteacher/Governor will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Headteacher/Governor is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, if necessary they will meet with the parents again. A decision will then be made which will be communicated in writing, normally within a further seven working days. Please note that as some staff are not available through the holiday period, the complaint may take longer to resolve during this time. The aim would always be to bring resolution within 28 days.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they can request that the complaint be referred to a Panel Hearing, Stage 3 of this Procedure. This referral should be made in writing within five working days, of the above decision, to the Chair of Governors.
- In the event of a complaint against the Headteacher, the matter should be referred formally to the Chair of Governors who will then follow the above process.
- 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 the ISI on request.

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 Chair of Governors, who is authorised by the Governing Body to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. They will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint 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 Chair of Governors. The Chair 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 fourteen 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 three 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 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 Chair of Governors of their decision who will write to the parents informing them of the 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 about.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Parents may make a 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 where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 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 three 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.

Parents may make a 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

Within the last year there has been 0 Formal Complaint which was resolved at Stage 2 (19/10/2020).