



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Longridge Towers 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 Complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to all staff and boarders. This complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to staff and boarders. It is posted on the school website and is available, like all other policies, on request from the Admissions Registrar.

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/daughter's Form teacher/Head of Year. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher/Head of Year cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head/the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher/Head of Year unless the Deputy Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form teacher/Head of Year 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 in the event that the Form teacher/Head of Year 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. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet 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 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. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- **If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3** of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents of day or boarding pupils seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), 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** on behalf of the Governors, who will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 14 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 5 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 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 Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.**

In any event all complainants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation (whatever form the investigation takes) within 28 days of receipt of the complaint.

Boarders and their parents can, for any complaints concerning child welfare in boarding, contact Ofsted by calling 08456 40 40 40 or e-mailing www.ofsted.gov.uk, or can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer by calling 01670 714411

A written record is kept of all serious complaints and their outcomes. All records of complaints made under this policy will be retained at the School for a minimum of 3 years from the date of resolution/conclusion thereof. This also applies to any complaints in respect of boarding and the written record of serious complaints and their outcomes is regularly reviewed by the Headmaster or a senior member of staff. Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay.

In the case of EYFS pupils i.e pupils who have not yet attained 6 years of age, parents should be aware that the School must provide Ofsted and ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action taken as a result of each complaint.

Parents of EYFS pupils can make a complaint directly to Ofsted and/or ISI should they so wish. The contact details for such organisations are as follows:

Ofsted
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
MANCHESTER M2 7LA

Tel: 0300 123 4234 Email: enquires@ofsted.gov.uk Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)
CAP House
9-12 Long Lane
LONDON
EC1A 9HA

Tel: 020 7600 0100 Website: www.isi.net

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.

11.7a COMPLAINTS BY PUPILS

Staff should be fully aware of the Pupil Complaints Procedure, issued as a pamphlet to pupils. The text of this is printed below:

This pamphlet is for your use. It explains what you can do should you feel particularly worried about something and what you may do if you wish to complain about how you are, or have been, treated. It is important that you read this pamphlet and keep it somewhere safe. If you misplace it and think there is something you need to complain about you can get another one from the Headmaster's Secretary, the Bursar's Secretary or Mrs Sutherland. If you don't understand anything in this pamphlet get a member of staff, or a friend, or an older pupil to explain it to you.

There are two things to remember:

- a) you may wish just to talk to someone, or
- b) you may wish to make a complaint.

either way, this pamphlet will assist you to decide what to do.

What do I do if I just want to talk to someone?

Remember you have close friends who may be able to help, or an older boy/girl to whom you feel you can turn. For boarders your boarding house tutor, housemaster, matron are always ready to help or any other member of staff you know and to whom you feel you can comfortably talk.

There may be times when you feel you can't talk with a member of staff - this is perfectly all right. Then you can talk, telephone or write to any of the following:

- your parents
- Mrs Sutherland
- the School Doctor
- Childline

Their address and telephone numbers are given at the end of this pamphlet.

Things that might make you unhappy or upset

- You feel you have been treated unfairly or verbally abused by a member of staff in school or in class.
- You feel that a punishment is unjust or in some way not right.
- A Prefect or senior has treated you unkindly.
- You are being bullied.
- You find it difficult to make friends.
- You think you are being discriminated against because of your colour or because you are male/female.
- You feel that no one understands the difficulties you are having with some of your work.
- Someone has made suggestions you think are not right.

- You feel the food you get is not as good as it should be.
- Someone is making fun of you.
- You feel there isn't enough respect for your privacy.
- Someone has taken something of yours and hasn't returned it.
- You think you are being badly taught and you aren't getting a fair deal.
- Or anything else you think is wrong.

What happens if you want to make a complaint about something?

Sometimes you may feel that you would like to complain about something that is worrying you. The first thing you should do is to speak to any member of staff you trust (e.g. your form tutor, housemaster, or boarding house tutor) ; you can have a friend with you if you wish another pupil or another member of staff. If you wish to speak to someone outside of the school, Mrs Sutherland of Alba, Longridge Park has agreed to be available to speak to any pupil who might wish to do so. You may telephone her to make an appointment or just walk round to see her.

If the matter can't easily be settled to your satisfaction then you can make the complaint formal. Then the following will happen:

You can do this in writing, addressing your letter to the Headmaster, or orally by telling the member of staff you have spoken to about your problem.

1. The complaint will be entered in the COMPLAINT BOOK held by the Deputy Head, then
2. you will get a note from the Deputy Head saying that he has seen the complaint and that it will be attended to within two school days of you making the complaint, then
3. you will be asked to talk the matter through with either the Deputy Head or the Head and you can have a friend with you, who may be another pupil, your boarding house tutor, form tutor or any member of staff. If, within two more days, you have not had the matter satisfactorily sorted out, you may contact any of the people whose names are listed above and whose addresses and telephone numbers appear at the end of this pamphlet.
4. Whoever you contact will speak to you at the school or, in the case of Mrs Sutherland, in Alba, Longridge Park - again you can have a friend with you and will advise you about what course seems sensible. At this stage it will be up to you to make a decision, acting on his/her advice.

No pupil will be penalized for making a complaint in good faith.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE OUTSIDE SCHOOL YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT:

- **PARENTS**
- **CHILDLINE** **0800-1111**
- **MRS SUTHERLAND** **(01289) 302047**
Alba
Longridge Park
Berwick upon Tweed

- **THE SCHOOL DOCTOR** **(01289) 330333**
DR RUFFE
Union Brae Surgery
Tweedmouth
Berwick upon Tweed

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