

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. 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. The recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises.**

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 5 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.

There have been no serious complaints received in the current academic year.

Reviewed: November 5th 2014

Reviewed: August 25th 2015

Reviewed: August 2016

Reviewed: January 2017

Review Date: August 2017