



Hopelands Preparatory School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Hopelands 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/daughter's form tutor or subject teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved straight away to the parents' satisfaction. If the member of staff concerned cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head.
- Complaints made informally and directly to the Head will usually be referred to the relevant tutor or teacher unless he or she deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The Head 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 working days or in the event that the Head and the parents 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 or speak to the parents concerned, normally within seven working 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 the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing, normally within seven working days. The Head will also give reasons for his or her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chairman of Governors.
- 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 the Hopelands Council of Governors. The Clerk to Council, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 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 two 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 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. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise to the parents, the Head, the Board of Governors and, where relevant, the person against whom the complaint was brought within seven days. Any findings or recommendations by the Panel will be kept on record on the school premises and made available for inspection by the proprietor and the Head.

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.

All complaints will be kept on record for at least three years and will detail whether the complaint was resolved at the preliminary or panel hearing stage.

Parents can contact either Ofsted or ISI directly, if they so wish. The contact details are:

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) CAP House 9 - 12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HA Telephone 020 7600 0100	Ofsted Royal Exchange Buildings St Ann's Square Manchester M2 7LA e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Telephone: 08456 014772
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Flowchart

Summary of Dealing with Complaints and Time Scale

