

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction:

The Royal Grammar School, Guildford is proud of the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to their students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with the procedure laid out below. The Royal Grammar School makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of students, and prospective students, on the school's website and on request from the Bursar.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

The following steps make up the informal resolution stage:

- 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's Head of Year. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If, however, the Head of Year cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department, the Director of Studies or the Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, the Director of Studies, the Deputy Head or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Head of Year unless the Head of Department, the Director of Studies, the Deputy Head or the Headmaster deem it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The 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 fourteen days during term time, or within fourteen days of the start of term following the Christmas, Easter, Summer of October half term in the case of complaints made during a holiday**, or in the event that the 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.
- If the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chairman of Governors.

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 Headmaster of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. The following process will be followed during stage 2:

- In most cases, the Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally **within seven 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Headmaster will keep a written record 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. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If the complaint is against the Head, the Chairman of Governors will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Chairman may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chairman is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The chairman will give reasons for 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 seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel. The following process will be followed:

- 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 Governing Body. The Clerk to the 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 twenty days**.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaints 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** 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** 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 including any recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person against whom the complaint was made.

Notes:

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except

where the Secretary of State or a body conducting and inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

A copy of the findings and recommendations of the Complaints Panel will be:

- Provided to the complainant and, where relevant the person complained about: and
- Available for inspection on the School premises by the Governors and the Headmaster.

A written record is kept of all complaints;

i) Whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing; and

ii) action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld).

In the academic year 2020-21 there were no formal complaints received.

Reviewed by: Bursar

Date of last review: 4 July 2021

Date of next review: Trinity 2022