

Complaints Policy – Ryde School



RYDE SCHOOL
WITH UPPER CHINE

Last reviewed by
Review Date:

MAW, March 2018
March 2019

Introduction

The school has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents or pupils do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this policy. This policy is available on the School website and on request via the Head Master's PA.

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 (in the Junior School) or tutor (in the Senior School.) Complaints regarding boarding should normally be dealt with by the Director of Boarding. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form teacher/tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult with senior colleagues before responding to the complaint. He or she may also refer the parents and complaint directly to a senior colleague such as the Director of Studies, Head of Pastoral Care or Deputy Head.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Head of Year, Head of House or the Deputy Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant tutor unless the person receiving the complaint deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. Even then, the tutor/form teacher can expect to be involved in any subsequent discussions.
- The tutor/form teacher/Director of Boarding 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 seven working days or in the event that the tutor and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents should proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this policy.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to one of the following:
 - If the child is in Fiveways to the Head of Fiveways
 - If the child is in the Junior School to the Head of the Junior School
 - If the child is in the Senior School, or the concern is to do with boarding, to the Head Master.
- Receipt of the written complaint should be formally acknowledged within two working days and the Head of Fiveways/Head of the Junior School/Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, that will mean meeting 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 of Fiveways/Head of the Junior School/Headmaster to carry out further investigations.
- The Head of Fiveways/Head of the Junior School/Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Head of Fiveways/Head of the Junior School/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. Reasons will be given for this decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, then parents of pupils in Fiveways and the Junior School should proceed to the Head Master who will review the complaint. Should parents remain unsatisfied after meeting with the Head Master, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this policy.
- If parents wish to make a complaint about the Headmaster they should write to the Chairman of the Governors, at the School address.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred by the Head Master to the Chairman of Governors.
- The matter will then be referred to a 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 Board of Governors. The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, will acknowledge the complaint within two working days and will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 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 five 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 and if the parents intend to bring a legal representative they should inform the School at least three working days prior to the hearing.
- 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 it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within five working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head Master, the Governors and, where relevant, the subject of the complaint.

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 the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Education and Skills Act, or where any other legal obligation prevails. Parents and pupils may contact ISI (Tel: 020 7776 8849) or the DfE should they be dissatisfied with the school's response to a complaint.

Record of Complaints

The School will keep a copy of formal letters of complaint in the 'Complaints File' which will be inspected regularly by the Chairman of Governors. A central record is kept of stage 2 and stage 3 complaints in the Headmaster's Office.

For the academic year 2016-17, no formal complaints were managed at Stage 3.

Response to Pupil or Parent Complaints

The School wishes to improve by hearing constructive criticism or by acting appropriately when something has gone wrong. It is part of our practice to survey parental and pupil opinion regularly to encourage concerns to be raised with us.

The School will not penalise or deal unfairly with any pupil or parent who makes a complaint in good faith.

Summary of procedures

PROCEDURE STAGE	DETAILS	TIME SCALE
Stage 1	Follow up and discussion with parents completed	7 working days
Stage 2	Formal acknowledgement Meeting with parents to discuss complaint Any further review needed. Decision taken and communicated in writing	2 working days since receipt 7 working days since receipt 14 working days since receipt
Stage 3	Formal acknowledgement Circulation of details and related matters to all parties Hearing Decisions and recommendations	2 working days since receipt 5 working days prior to the Hearing 10 working days since receipt 5 working days since the Hearing

Ryde School Complaints Management Structure



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