

# **HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

## **PARENTS' COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

*This policy is applicable from EYFS through to year 13. This procedure applies to parents of existing pupils, and also parents of former pupils if any stage of the procedure was entered into whilst a pupil at the school.*

### **Principles**

We aim to be a listening and responsive school. We encourage parents to inform us of their concerns while they are still minor ones which can be more easily resolved.

We recognise that there are times when there will be issues that are not resolved easily or to the satisfaction of parents and they will wish to make a complaint. Complaints will be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure. Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is a complaint and falls under the scope of this procedure.

### **Stage 1 – Informal resolution**

- We hope that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher or Head of Year. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher or Head of Year cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department, Deputy Principal (Academic or Pastoral), Head of Prep, or the Head.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Deputy Principal (Academic or Pastoral), Head of Prep, or the Head may be referred to the relevant Form Teacher, Head of Year or more senior colleague unless the Head of Department, Deputy Principal, (Pastoral or Academic), Head of Prep, or the Head deems it appropriate for them to deal with the matter personally.
- The staff member who receives the complaint will make a written record of all complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 15 working days of receiving the complaint or in the event that the Form Teacher, Head of Year or more senior colleague 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. The member of staff who deals with the complaint will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

### **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 with the parents concerned, normally within 10 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 of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing normally within 10 working days. The Head will also give reasons for his decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure. Parents must indicate their desire to proceed to Stage 3 of the procedure within 14 days of receipt of the Stage 2 decision.

### **Stage 3 – Panel hearing**

- If parents seek to proceed to 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 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 or Vice-Chair of the board of governors. 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 15 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 5 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 or consideration 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 5 working days of the hearing. It will be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Panel to ensure that the Clerk to the Governors writes 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. A copy of the panel's findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and 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 where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

A written record is kept of all complaints which reach stage 2 or beyond. A written record is kept of any action taken by the school as a result of complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld.

### **Persistent correspondence**

Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this will be regarded as vexatious and fall outside the scope of this procedure.

### **Systemic Issues**

Where an individual parental complaint highlights an underlying systemic issue this is considered and addressed by the school's senior leadership team.

### **Exclusions**

Details of parents' right to appeal against permanent exclusion can be found in the school's [Exclusions Policy](#).

### **Early Years Provision (EYFS)**

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS regulations should be made to the Head. These will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. In the Early Years Provision in Hulme Nursery and Infants, the record of complaint is kept for at least three years. If parents are dissatisfied with the response of the school they can make a complaint to either Ofsted or ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) if they so wish. The record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) Helpline: 0300 123 1231  
[www.isi.gov.uk](http://www.isi.gov.uk) 0207 600 0100

NB The working day refers to term time and the time limits may be extended during the school

holidays.

A copy of this policy is available to parents of existing and prospective pupils on request.

**In the last year there have been two parental complaints that have reached stage 2 and two parental complaints reaching stage three. (2023-2024)**

**Parents' Complaints Procedure reviewed: March 2023**

**Next Review Due: March 2025**