

# **The Old Hall School**

## **Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Old Hall School has long prided itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

- 1.1 It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 1.2 If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parent's satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult another member of staff, the Head of Juniors, the Deputy Head or the Head.
- 1.3 Complaints made directly to the Head of Juniors, the Deputy Head or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form or Subject Teacher unless the Head of Juniors, Deputy Head, or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- 1.4 The Form Teacher will make a written record of any serious complaints and the date on which they were received. This is done on a central log held in the Deputy Head's office. Should the matter not be resolved within one working week or in the event that the Form Teacher 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.
- 1.5 A specific initial procedure appropriate for the Junior Department is set out in the Kindergarten / Junior Information for Parents booklet.
- 1.6 It is not possible to deal productively with anonymous complaints.

### **Stage 2 - Formal Resolution**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 In most cases, the Head will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 2-3 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

- 2.3 It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- 2.4 The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this Procedure.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

- 3.1 If parents seek to invoke stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Secretary to the Trust, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- 3.2 The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least 3 persons not directly involved in the matters dealing with the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and the running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Secretary to the Trust, 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 days.
- 3.3 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 4 days prior to the hearing.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- 3.6 Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 21 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.

Parents can be assured that all 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. Details will be kept on file for three years after the child has left the school.

#### **4 Parents of EYFS Pupils**

**4.1** If school cannot resolve the EYFS issue, then contact the Director of Children's Services: Julia Almond. Address: Telford and Wrekin Council, PO Box 440, Civic Offices, TF3 4WF. Telephone 01952 380000

**4.2** Contacting Ofsted  
You may wish to raise your concern with Ofsted.  
Ofsted  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SG  
Telephone 08456 404040

**4.3** Contacting the Independent Schools Inspectorate

You may wish to raise your concern with ISI.

Independent Schools Inspectorate  
CAP House  
9 - 12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA

Telephone 020 7600 0100  
Fax 020 7776 8849

#### **5 Monitoring and review**

**5.1** This policy is reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

**Signed:**

**Date:** January 2009