



# **FYLING HALL SCHOOL**

## **Complaints Procedure Policy**

**Last updated: 7 February 2008**

## **Complaints Procedure**

In such a small school we aim to develop an atmosphere in which the students can approach members of staff in the confidence that their complaint will be taken seriously. They have a right to be listened to. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. This complaints policy is available to parents on request from the school office.

### **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 child's Form Tutor or Matron. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor or Matron cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult a Head of Department or the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor or Matron unless the Head of Department or the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him or her to deal with it personally.
- The Form Tutor or Matron 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 a few days or in the event that that the Form Tutor or Matron and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the 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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will meet with the parents concerned, normally within a few 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 written records 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 in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his 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 Chair of Trustees, who can 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. (Such a person would normally be someone of standing in the local community, who has held positions of responsibility and is used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments/points.) The Trustees shall appoint each of the Panel Members. The Chairman of Trustees, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within a week.

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 less than two 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 representations 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within three days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the complainant and headteacher 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 complainant, the Headmaster, the Trustees and, where relevant, the person complained of.

A central register should be maintained allowing for a written record to be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

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 section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.