



## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The school has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. It is hoped that complaints will never go beyond Stage 1 of the process; however, the school is required by Law to have a formal Complaints Procedure.

### **STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

- 1.1 It is hoped that all complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- 1.2 Complaints made directly to the Head or other members of the Senior Management will be referred to the relevant member of staff for follow up, unless it is felt that the matter needs to be dealt with personally by the Head or another member of the Senior Management Team.
- 1.3 A written record of all concerns and complaints made to Senior Management will be kept and the date that they were received. Should the matter not be resolved in five working days or in the event of the relevant member of staff and the parent not reaching a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised that they may proceed with their complaint in the following way.

### **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 confer with the parents concerned, normally within five working 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 Gresham's School Complaints Panel, the list of whom is able to be obtained from the Head.

- 3.2 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 Governors of Gresham's School. The person chairing the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within five 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 two 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 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 three working 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 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 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.

If your worry or complaint concerns the welfare of pupils you may wish to contact: OFSTED on 08456 40 40 40 or by email at [ENQUIRIES@OFSTED.GOV.UK](mailto:ENQUIRIES@OFSTED.GOV.UK).

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