



## **POLICY FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

### **Introduction**

Leicester High 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 Complaints Procedure. Leicester High School makes its Complaints Procedure available to all parents and pupils (both current and prospective) on the School's website and in the School Office during the school day, and Leicester High School will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and of the form in which it is published or available.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of the Schedule 1 to the Education Independent School Standards Regulations 2014, Leicester High School will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils, and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the academic school year.

### **What constitutes a Complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the School as a whole, about a specific department, or about an individual member of staff, and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the School is within the scope of this procedure. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the School has done something wrong, failed to do something that it should have done, or has acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The School is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you or your child raises in good faith.

### **The three-stage Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution: Senior School**

- ◆ It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- ◆ If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their daughter's Form Teacher or Head of Year. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the satisfaction of all concerned. If the Form Teacher or Head of Year cannot resolve this matter alone, it may be necessary for him/ her to consult the Deputy Head.
- ◆ Complaints made directly to a Head of Department or the Deputy Head will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher or Head of Year unless the Head of Department or Deputy Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.



- ◆ The form teacher or Head of Year/Key Stage will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 7 working days, or in the event that the form teacher or Head of Year fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Complaints procedure.
- ◆ If, however, the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Margaret Bowler, who can be contacted through the School.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution: Junior Department, including EYFS**

- ◆ It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- ◆ If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their daughter's class teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve this matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult the EYFS Co-ordinator or the Head of the Junior Department as appropriate.
- ◆ The class teacher /EYFS Co-ordinator /Head of the Junior Department will make a written record of all concerns and complaints on the appropriate proforma and the date on which they were received and file a copy in the office. Should the matter not be resolved within 7 working days, or in the event that the class teacher /EYFS Co-ordinator/Head of the Junior Department fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of the procedure.
- ◆ All written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainants notified of the outcome within 28 days. A record of all such written complaints must be kept for 3 years.
- ◆ If, however, the complaint is against the Head of the Junior Department, parents should make their complaint directly to the Headmaster.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

- ◆ If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, then 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, within five 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 Headmaster 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 if appropriate. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- ◆ If the complaint is against the Head, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Head and for all the relevant documents. The Chair of Governors may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair of Governors is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair of Governors will give the reasons for her decision.
- ◆ If the parents are not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of the 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 the Chair of Governors, who has been nominated 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, two of whom shall be members of the governing body and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the governing body. The Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and within 14 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 3 working days prior to the hearing.
- ◆ The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. 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.
- ◆ After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will make findings and may make recommendations.
- ◆ The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 5 working days of the hearing (although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following the hearing). The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about as well as the Chair of Governors and the Head. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will also be available for inspection on the School premises by the Chair of Governors and the Head.

### **Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints**

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within 5 working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the School's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 20 working days. Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 20 working days.

Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure 'working days' refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time, excluding bank holidays.

### **Recording Complaints.**

Following resolution of a complaint, the School will keep a written record of all complaints and any action taken by the School as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld) for 3 years. Additional records may be kept which may include some or all of the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of Parent
- Name of Pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations).



Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

**Parents of children in the EYFS:**

The School will investigate any written complaints relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, and will notify the complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Leicester High School will provide ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints (regardless of Stage) made during any specified period, and the action, which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for 3 years.

Parents may complain directly to ISI or OFSTED if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements. The contact details are as follows:–

Independent Schools Inspectorate  
CAP House  
9-12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA  
Tel: 020 7600 0100  
Email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)

OFSTED  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
Tel: 0300 123 1231  
Email: [enquires@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquires@ofsted.gov.uk)

**The Number of Complaints registered for the preceding academic year:**

- School Academic Year 2018-19 - there were no complaints registered under Stage 2 and no complaints registered under the Stage 3 formal procedure.

Sponsor update	EM/DW
School Committee review	
Leadership Team review	June 2019
Governor Committee review	Education April 2018
Next update	2 years April 2020