

HALL SCHOOL WIMBLEDON

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Hall School Wimbledon 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 with care and in accordance with this procedure. This procedure applies to parents of current pupils. Hall School Wimbledon makes details of its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils in electronic form on the school's website and in the school office during the school day and will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is available and of the form in which it is available.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, Hall School Wimbledon will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, or the Secretary of State, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding 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. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done or 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 school's comprehensive Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy should be referred to for all child protection complaints or allegations. The Whistleblowing Policy is also available for all individuals to raise any genuine concerns which are in the public interest, relating to conduct or suspected malpractice in the school.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. These informal complaints can be quickly dealt with at a brief meeting, by telephone or email communication and should not require a formal letter of complaint.
- Parents should first make their complaint known to their child's Class Teacher if the complaint relates to the teaching of their child. If the complaint relates to a teacher, the parent should make an informal approach to the child's Senior Tutor/Section Head. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the matter cannot be resolved it may be necessary for this member of staff to consult a more senior member of staff. Complaints made directly to the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Teacher or Senior Tutor/Section Head unless considered appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.

- The person who receives the complaint 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 7 days or in the event that the person receiving the complaint 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.
- If the complaint relates to a Senior Tutor/Section Head or the manner in which a Senior Tutor/Section Head has dealt with a complaint about a teacher or another child, the matter should be referred to the Head.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

2a Complaint heard by Head

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. The attached form may be used.
- In most cases, the Head will contact the parents concerned, normally within 7 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, with reasons for his decision, within 14 days of the initial discussion with parents.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Head or the complaint is about the Head, they should proceed to Stage 2b of this procedure.

2b Complaint heard by the Senior Leadership Team

- The complaint will be considered further by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the school relevant to the complaint.
- Once the SLT 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, with reasons for this decision.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, if not satisfied with the action taken by the Head and SLT, the School Complaints Panel will be convened to consider the matter.
- If a hearing of the Complaints Panel is called, the Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the complaint. This will normally be two members of the Senior Leadership Team from the other school and a third person independent of the management or running of the school. The Chair of the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 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 normally not later than 3 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 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 make findings and may make recommendations.
- The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, as soon as possible following the hearing. This appeal Panel Hearing stage will be completed within a further 28 days of the previous investigation if the appeal is lodged during term-time, and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. 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.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five 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 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. Hall School Wimbledon will investigate all Stage 2 written complaints relating to the requirements under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

Stage 3, if necessary, will be completed within a further 28 days of Stage 2, if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain 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 to the extent required by paragraph 33(k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014,

As required under the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, Hall School Wimbledon will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

The record of such complaints will be kept for at least 3 years. Parents may complain directly to Ofsted if they believe the provider is not meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements:

Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester,
M1 2WD.

Email: enquires@ofsted.gov.uk
Tel. 0300 123 1231

Hall School Wimbledon will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all written complaints relating to the requirements under the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 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 at least three years. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential.

COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete and return to THE HEAD who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: