

Complaints Procedure



There may be occasions on which parents wish to draw to the school's attention a matter of concern regarding their son's or daughter's education or happiness at school. All such complaints will be treated seriously and, as far as possible, confidentially (except in so far as is required of the school by the Education [Independent Schools Standards] Regulations of 2003). Our aim is always to resolve such issues quickly, informally and personally.

There have been 0 (zero) formal complaints in the previous academic year.

Informal resolution

It is hoped that all complaints and concerns will be resolved as early and as informally as possible. Where parents have a complaint, it should initially be discussed with an appropriate member of staff (normally the Form Teacher). If this member of staff is unable to resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Deputy Head or the Headmistress.

Whenever a complaint is received, a written record will be kept by the teacher who receives the complaint, logging its nature and the date on which it was received. If the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved within fourteen days, then parents may choose to proceed to a formal resolution of their complaint. The procedure for this is outlined here.

Formal resolution

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, then parents should put their concern in writing to the Headmistress, who will decide the appropriate course of action. A full record will be kept of the complaint and of the action taken in respect of it. It is likely that the Headmistress will wish to meet personally with the parents in order to discuss the matter, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint. It may be that the matter can be resolved at this meeting, or the Headmistress may think it necessary to carry out further investigations. She will always keep the parents fully informed (by letter, telephone, or in person) of the ways in which the issue is being handled.

When the Headmistress has reached her decision, the parents will be informed in writing, with a full account of the Headmistress's reasoning.

Resolution assisted by Council

The Headmistress may, if she chooses, pass the complaint to Council to aid the process of formal resolution. She will inform the parents if she thinks that this course of action will be helpful and appropriate. The Chairman of Council will then identify two members of Council who will receive copies of all relevant papers from the Headmistress and will meet privately with the parents to hear the complaint, and with other affected parties. The involvement of members of Council at this stage is not investigatory, but is rather to assist the Headmistress and the parents to reach agreement in the matter and to decide upon an effective process of resolution.

Independent resolution

If parents are not satisfied with the Headmistress's decision, they may pass their complaint on to the Council of UCS who will establish an appropriate Panel to consider the matter. The particular arrangements for this stage of the procedure will be communicated to parents at the time.

The Panel will normally comprise three persons, two of whom are members of the Council of UCS and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Members of the Panel will be appointed by the Council of UCS. Hearings will normally be held within 28 days of the approach to Council. The parents will be invited to attend, and have a right to be accompanied by one other person (this may be a relative, teacher or friend; legal representation will not normally be appropriate). Other relevant evidence may be heard.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the 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, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations. This process will normally be completed within seven days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and of the reasons for it. Any further recommendations will also be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmistress, the Council of UCS and, where relevant, the person complained of. The decision of the Panel will be final.

This document applies to The Phoenix including Early Years Foundation Stage.

For parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage an official complaint may also be made to OFSTED www.ofsted.gov.uk and/or the ISI (Independent Schools' Inspectorate) www.isi.net

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