

# **COWORTH-FLEXLANDS SCHOOL**

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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. This policy is to be made available on the school website and on request to parents of pupils and prospective pupils. The policy applies to ALL pupils within the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A written record will be kept for a minimum of three years of all complaints and of when they are resolved.

### **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 son/daughter's Form teacher. Should they not be available, or in cases related to non academic matters, contact should be made direct to the Bursar. Where possible informal complaints are best made in person rather than phone, writing or email. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher or Bursar cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher or the Bursar unless the Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form teacher or Bursar 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 seven days or in the event that the Form teacher/Bursar 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. The written record is to be passed to the Head for entry in the complaints register.

### **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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet the parents concerned, normally within seven 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 and as part of finding a resolution may use the services of the Governor most appropriate to the matter raised.
- 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 relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in

writing. Note that the Head may feel unable to deal directly with the complaint and after investigation pass it on to Panel (Stage 3). The Head will also give reasons for this decision.

- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

### **STAGE 3 – PANEL MEETING**

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chairman of the Governors.
- 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 day to day management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Governors. The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a meeting 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 not later than seven days prior to the meeting.
- The Chairman shall consult with the Governors and/or professional advisors as appropriate.
- The parents may be accompanied to the meeting by one other person. 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.
- 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 14 days of the meeting. 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(3)f and 7K of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2009; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Note: A record of all complaints is kept for the minimum period of three years.

If parents wish to make a complaint to the Independent Schools Inspectorate they may contact [info@isi.net](mailto:info@isi.net) or write to: ISI, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA. Tel: 020 7600 0100.

If parents wish to contact Ofsted in relation to Early Years Matters only. The address is: Ofsted, North Regional Centre, 3rd Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA.