

Ruckleigh School

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A copy of this Complaints Procedure is available to parents and parents of prospective pupils upon request from the school office and on the school website. The procedure applies throughout the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Ruckleigh School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have reason to be dissatisfied, they can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally
- If parents have a complaint, they should contact their child's Form Teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction
- A record will be kept of how and when the issue was resolved
- If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for the teacher to consult a Senior Teacher/Headmistress
- Complaints made directly to a Senior Teacher or the Headmistress will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Senior Teacher/Headmistress deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally
- The Form Teacher 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 3 working days or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution informally then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

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 Headmistress. The Headmistress will then decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take
- The Headmistress will speak to the parents concerned within 3 working days of receiving the complaint to discuss the matter. Wherever possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage
- It may be necessary for the Headmistress to make further investigations which will be carried out within 7 working days of her receiving the complaint
- If a member of staff is being investigated, he/she is entitled to be accompanied to the interview with the Headmistress, by a person of their choosing. This may be a friend, Senior Teacher or Union Representative.
- The Headmistress will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint
- Once the Headmistress 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 Headmistress will also give reasons for her decision
- A record will be kept of the decision made and the reason for it
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this 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 Mrs Laurens (Bursar, Registrar and Director) who has been appointed by the Directors of Ruckleigh School 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 matter detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Directors of Ruckleigh School. Mrs Laurens, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within 10 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 5 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 a friend. Legal representation is not normally 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the Hearing
- **The decision of the Panel will be final**
- A copy of the findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about
- A copy of the findings and recommendations, if any, will be available on the school premises by the Directors of the School and the Headmistress

Written complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedure as stated above and complainants will be notified of the outcome within 28 days of school having received the complaint.

School will keep a record of each complaint stating it was resolved at Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3, for at least three years.

EYFS parents have the right to contact Ofsted if after speaking to the school Early Years Coordinator and the Headmistress they feel they have not received a satisfactory response to their complaint. Tel. 0845 640 4040

The contact details are also displayed on the parents' notice board in Nursery and Kindergarten.

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 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails.