

Complaints Procedure: The Whole School Policy including EYFS and Boarding

Hall Grove 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.

For the purpose of this policy, a school working day is considered as a full school working day within term time and does not include days within the school holidays or over half terms.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally and at most within 28 school working days of the receipt of the complaint.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher or Head of Boarding. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head of Year, Head of Section or the Headmaster.
- Complaints made directly to the Head of Section, or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher or Head of Boarding 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 school working days or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.
- Should the complaint be against the Headmaster the same procedures apply.

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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. If the complaint is about the Headmaster then it will be directed by other members of SMT to Dr John Cook, who sits on the Complaints Panel.
- The Headmaster will meet the parents concerned, within fifteen school 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 Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headmaster 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 Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- 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 Dr John Cook, who has been appointed by the Headmaster 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, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Headmaster. Dr Cook, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within twenty school working days of receiving the complaint.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any relevant matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within three school days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and recommendations will be available on the school premises and sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster/Proprietor and, where relevant, the person about whom a complaint has been lodged. This will be carried out within 28 school working days of the complaint being received.
- The school will notify complainants of the outcome of an investigation within 28 school working days of having received the complaint.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them or where any other legal obligation prevails.

A record of complaints is kept for at least three years and are available to Ofsted and ISI on request. They detail whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing and the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether they are to be upheld.

Parents of children in the EYFS can make a complaint to ISI should they feel the school are not fulfilling the EYFS requirements. Contact details for ISI are as follows:

Independent Schools Inspectorate, Ground Floor, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA; telephone 020 7600 0100.

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