



LOCKERS PARK SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

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LOCKERS PARK SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

With the introduction of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2003 (which came into force on 1st September 2003), independent schools are required by law to adopt, make available and apply a complaints procedure in order to comply with the Standards against which ISI inspections will be carried out.

INTRODUCTION

Lockers Park 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 the following Procedure. By following this procedure, complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which has the child's best interests as its focus. The complaints procedure is available to parents of pupils. The following policy is available for parents to read in the school office.

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 child's form teacher. 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, Deputy Head or Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head of year, Deputy Head or Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 48 hours, or in the event that the Form teacher and the parent 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.

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.
- In most cases, The Headmaster will acknowledge the complaint within 48 hours and arrange to meet with the parents concerned, normally within 5 working days 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, which may take up to 3 working days after which the Headmaster will respond within 5 working days.

- 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.
- The school's Complaint Log is limited to those complaints made in writing under the formal part of the procedure. The log will record whether the complaint was resolved following a formal procedure or a panel hearing at Stage 3 procedure, and what action has been taken by the school as result of these complaints.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents wish to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a Governor, who has been appointed by the Chairman of Governors 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 (possibly the local Vicar of St. John's). Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Headmaster, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.
- Should a complaint be made against the management of the school, all governors will be implicated in the complaint, and thus governors will not be eligible to be part of the Complaints Panel. In this instance the Complaints Panel will consist of three individuals all of whom are independent of the management and running of the school.
- 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 7 working days prior to the hearing.
- The panel hearing will proceed even if the parent subsequently decides not to attend, unless the parent indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further.
- 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 7 working days of the Hearing. 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 Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant the person complained of. The findings and recommendations will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and Headmaster.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records of all complaints, to whichever stage they reach, will be kept for three years and will remain confidential except in so far as is required by the School in the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended in 2009; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's Inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to an individual complaint will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act and the regulations amended in 2014 requests access to them.

Regulations for Boarders

- (a) The complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to all staff and boarders; hard copies are available in both teacher and kitchen staffrooms and the office. In addition to this the procedure can be found on both the intranet and website.
- (b) Boys can consult the "Problem" poster that is displayed around the school and in classrooms. This gives details of a range of people, both staff and outside agencies in the event of a problem or issue. If they wish to see a hard copy of the procedure, they may do so by this facility.
- (c) Boarders and their parents are informed by the school how they can contact ISI regarding any complaints concerning boarding welfare; this is done via the contact details at the bottom.
- (d) A written record is kept of all serious complaints and their outcomes for regular review by the Head or a Senior member of staff; these can be found in the Headmaster's study.
- (e) Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay; see introduction of Procedure.
- (f) Boarders are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith; see boarding policy, paragraph 19.

A written record of all complaints will be kept indicating whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. The records will be kept for 5 years after the date of the resolution of the complaint. There were no complaints in the last school year which were not resolved at stage 1 of the procedure.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days of the receipt of the written complaint.

Parents can make a complaint to ISI or Ofsted if they believe the School is not meeting requirements, including those regarding EYFS.

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