



## HOE BRIDGE SCHOOL

### Complaints Procedure

#### **Introduction**

Hoe Bridge 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 procedure is relevant to all children in school from Early Years through to Year 2 in the Pre-Prep and Year 8 in the Prep.

This document is a statement of the procedures whereby parents who have a complaint may approach the school. Complaints are expressions of parental or pupil dissatisfaction or concern, written or verbal, regarding and aspect of the way in which a child is being taught or dealt with by staff. Complaints may be in connection with rules and procedures, the conduct of staff or any aspect of school life which impacts upon parents or their child.

There have been no formal complaints raised with the school in the past academic year 2009-2010.

#### **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 class/form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult others – subject teacher, Director of Studies, Deputy Head, Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep.
- Complaints made directly to the subject teacher, Director of Studies, Deputy Head, Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff unless the Head deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- The member of staff dealing with the complaint 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 a week or in the event that the member of staff dealing with this complaint 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.

#### **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 and speak to the parents concerned, normally within one or two 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.
- 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 of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for her 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 the Convenor, who has been appointed by the 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. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Convenor, 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 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 3 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 14 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 Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

### **Complaints against the Head**

Any complaints against the Head must be directed to the Chairman of the Governors. If he cannot resolve the problem immediately he may refer the matter to the panel.

### **Confidentiality**

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 7 (k) of the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Regulatory Requirements 2010 under section 162A of the 2002 Act; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Records of complaints are kept securely in the school office for a period of three years.

### **Complaints by pupils**

The principles of this policy also apply to complaints made by pupils. However there may be some adaptations.

- Pupils should be able to raise concerns with any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable, whether it be the class or form teacher, support staff, senior staff or Head.
- Complaints that appear trivial need to be handled seriously as it may be an indication of something underlying and more serious.
- Pupils may need support from a friend or another adult

Pupils are given the opportunity to explore the issue of complaints, fair treatment for all, supporting and mentoring others in the PSHE programme.

**Contacts**

Parents may make a complaint against the school directly to Ofsted or ISI at the following contacts

ISI                                      Durell Barnes                      0207776 8830      [durell.barnes@isi.net](mailto:durell.barnes@isi.net)  
Ofsted                                      08456404045      [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Chairman of Governors Mr David Hemley      01483 760065

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