

## Parental Concerns and Complaints Procedure

### Introduction

The Mount School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided for its pupils. However, if parents do have a concern or complaint, they can expect it to be treated seriously by the School in accordance with this policy. The School is required under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2003 to make the policy known to all parents.

### Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

In the majority of cases complaints and concerns are resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son's or daughter's Form Teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means and to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter, it may be necessary for parents to consult the Head Teacher.

Complaints made directly to the Head Teacher or a Director will usually be referred back to the Form Teacher for resolution unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally. Concerns relating to child protection must be referred directly to the Form Teacher, unless the concern relates to him or her, in which case the Head Teacher should be contacted.

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 7 working days or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint to the next stage of this procedure.

### Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint, in writing, to the Head Teacher, who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head Teacher will meet with or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, an agreement will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Head Teacher to carry out further investigations. The Head Teacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head Teacher 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 Teacher will also give reasons for the decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to the final stage 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 Directors 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 two members drawn from the Directors and Senior Management Team not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matters be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 3 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 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 Head Teacher, and Form Teacher.

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(2)(1) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

N.B. For the purposes of this document, a 'working day' falls between Monday and Friday.

Reviewed and Amended September 2015