



Complaints Policy

Scope:	Whole School
Release date:	September 2023
Review date:	September 2024
Author:	Head
Reviewer:	Assistant Head Pastoral
Approval body:	Board of Governors

Linked Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Parent Contract

Availability

This policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the school website, and a printed copy may be requested from the School Office.

Policy Statement

Derby Grammar School prides 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.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's Form Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Subject / Department, Head of Year or another member of staff judged most relevant.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Year or Head of Subject/Department or other member of staff will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor unless the Head of Year or Head of Subject/Department or other member of staff deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 10 working school days*, or in the event that the member of staff 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.

- If the complaint is against the Head, then parents are advised to write to the Chair of Governors so that the matter can be dealt with directly.

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 within 30 days of the lack of resolution from Stage 1.
- The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- Usually the Head will meet with and/or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 working school 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 complaints received at Stage 2.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be reached and the parents informed in writing in a further 7 working school days. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3. This should occur within 90 days of receiving the Head's response to the formal complaint.
- Additional requirements apply for EYFS settings beyond the main school. Written complaints about the fulfillment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Stage 3 – Submission to a Governors' Panel

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, they will be referred to the Chair of Governors who will appoint a Complaints Panel to hear the complaint.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three members, not directly connected with the complaint, be chaired by a member of the Governing Body and will contain one person who is outside of the School's workforce and unconnected with the management or running of the School.
- The Chair of the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within 10 working school days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars should be supplied to all parties no later than 5 working school days prior to the hearing.
- One other person may accompany the parents to the hearing, for example a relative, friend or teacher. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If a parent chooses not to exercise the right to attend the hearing, the Panel will still go ahead with the hearing, in conformity with the complaints policy.
- 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 within 14 working school days. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decisions and reasons for it. The Panel's findings will be sent in

writing to parents, the Head and where relevant, the person complained about. The findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the School premises with the Chair of Governors and the Head.

Parents can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except as required by Section 109 of the 2008 Education Act. The School processes data in accordance with its Privacy Notice. The Privacy Notice can be found on the website and can also be made available to you upon request.

A written record of a complaint will be kept at Stage 2 or if proceeded to the Governors' Panel. Records of actions taken as a result of a complaint at Stage 2 or Stage 3 will also be kept.

A sample of informal complaints made at Stage 1 are kept for management purposes to enable patterns of low-level concern to be monitored. This is done on a half-termly basis.

Complaints that do not have safeguarding implications will be retained for a minimum of 7 years. Where there is a safeguarding angle, complaints must be preserved for the term of the Independent

Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pensionable age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is recognised that there may be some flexibility required in the adherence to time frames contained within this policy. This is to allow for extenuating circumstances for parents to escalate their complaints or indeed for the School to respond in light of disruption such as staff absence or lockdown.

Once a complaint has been considered at all three stages of the complaints policy, there is no further recourse within the scope of the policy. Any repeated attempt by a parent to raise the same complaint is therefore outside the scope of the policy.

Pupils' complaints are considered seriously and where they cannot be resolved to a pupil's satisfaction an appropriate outcome will be reached which balances the rights and duties of pupils.

Pupils are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

Number of complaints that reached Stage 2 in the preceding academic year, 2022-2023: 0

Number of complaints that reached Stage 3 in the preceding academic year, 2022-2023: 0

*A 'Working School Day' is defined as a day during Derby Grammar School's term time, between the normal school hours of 8.30am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday. We do not count any days that are outside of our advertised term times or are school closure days/INSET/Staff Training days. If you wish to see a copy of our term dates, please check on the website.