

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	



## **Complaints Procedure POLICY**

**School Tier:** Whole School

**Related Policies:** GDPR Policy and Record Keeping/Archive policy

### **POLICY AIMS**

Through the operation of this policy we aim to: recognise, address and resolve complaints in a timely and transparent manner, learning from events and changing practice as necessary.

### **Introduction**

Woodard Schools (Nottinghamshire) Limited (WSNL) prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to the pupils at Worksop College and Ranby House School. However, if parent(s) or pupil(s) do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the schools with care and in accordance with this Procedure. WSNL makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on its school websites.

In accordance with Part 6 paragraph 24(3)(g) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, WSNL will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the ISI for the purposes of section 162A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (as subsequently amended), details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

### **What Constitutes a Complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do something that it should have done or acted unfairly.

## A14 Complaints

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Furthermore, a pupil will not be penalised for a complaint that they or their parents raise in good faith.

### **Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints**

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's targets to complete the handling of complaints lodged during term-time are detailed below. If the complaint is lodged during holiday periods the matter will be handled as soon as is practicable. In EYFS, complaints will be investigated within four working days from the complaint being received in writing. Such complainants will be notified of the outcome of any investigation within twenty eight days of receiving the written complaint.

### **Recording of Complaints**

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by Part 6 paragraph 24(3)(g) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, by the Secretary of State, or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority, or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

### **Definition of Pupil and Parent**

In respect of all schools operated by WSNL, the term "parent" means Parent or Guardian; the term "Pupil" means Pupil "in statu pupillari" at the time when the complaint is made.

### **Pupil Complaint:**

Pupils may make a formal complaint by adopting the procedure:

- a) at the College as is set out in the Pupil Charter **or**
- b) at Ranby House School, as is outlined in the Pupils Charter and explained to pupils by Senior Staff, Houseparents and/or Form Teachers.

### **Parent Complaint:**

#### **Stage 1 - Informal Resolution:**

- 1.1 It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

## A14 Complaints

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	

- 1.2 Parent(s) who wish to make a complaint are encouraged to contact the relevant member of teaching or House staff who will make a written record of the complaint, including its date. This written complaint will be acknowledged within two working days.
- 1.3 If this is deemed unsatisfactory, contact should be made with the Deputy Heads at Worksop College or at Ranby House:
- Contact can be made by telephone but should be supported in writing.
  - The complaint will be acknowledged and parent(s) can expect to be contacted by the appropriate investigating member of staff to clarify details.
  - The parent(s) should receive a formal, written response within a period of one week from the date of first contact with the Deputy Head, allowing for the matter to be investigated fully and fairly.
- 1.4 If the complaint is against the Headmaster of the College or the Ranby House, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chairman of Governors (Custos). Such a complaint should be sent to her via the Clerk to the Governors, Worksop College, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S80 3AP.

### **Stage 2 - Formal Resolution:**

- 2.1 In the event that parent(s) feel that a satisfactory resolution has not been reached by the Informal Resolution route, they should write to the Headmaster of the College or Ranby House.
- The Headmaster will acknowledge the complaint within two working days and will contact the parent(s) concerned again within 21 days having investigated the matter further.
  - The parent(s) will be invited to meet the Headmaster.
  - The Headmaster will keep a written record of meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
  - The complainant and the person complained about will be given the findings and recommendations.
  - The findings and recommendations will be available on a central register for inspection at the school by the governors, the Headmaster and ISI Inspectorate.
- 2.3 If the complaint is against the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Headmaster and for all the relevant documents. The Chair may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair will give reasons for her decision.

## A14 Complaints

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	

- 2.4 The formal resolution should be completed within a timescale of 21 days. If the parent(s) are still not satisfied with the outcome, they can request a hearing by the Complaints Panel.

### Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- 3.1 If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, they should contact the Chair of Governors in writing via the Clerk to the Governors. The Clerk has been appointed by the Governors to arrange hearings of the Complaints Panel, under the direction of the Chair. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within two working days and will forthwith:
- i. Furnish the parent with a copy of the complaint obtained in accordance with the provisions of 1.2. The complainant must then, within 7 days of its receipt, acknowledge its accuracy and completeness and/or furnish any further material to complete and conclude the complaint and also acknowledge that the complaint is now full and complete. Thereafter, no further material from the complainant will be admitted in any form.
  - ii. The Chair of Governors will then appoint a Chairman of the Panel.
- 3.2 The Complaints Panel is assembled, on behalf of the appointed Panel Chairman, by the Clerk to the Governors and is composed of at least 3 people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school<sup>1</sup>. The other members will be members of the Governing Body. A hearing will be scheduled and this will normally be within 21 days.
- 3.3 If the Panel Chair deems it necessary, he may require that further particulars of the complaint (from the Complainant) be provided or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of all such material, including all material provide to the Panel by the Complainant and the Headmaster, shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.
- 3.4 In default of compliance with the requirements in section 3.1 (i), the Chair of Governors may inform the Complainant that the complaint is treated as withdrawn. If the Complainant is in default of the requirements in section 3.3, the Panel Chair may advise the Chairman of Governors that the complaint should be treated as withdrawn. The Chair of Governors will then, if she agrees, notify the Complainant accordingly.

## A14 Complaints

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	

- 3.5 One other person may accompany the parent(s) to the hearing. This may be a relative, teacher and/or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 3.6 If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. However, 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 21 days of the Hearing.
- 3.7 The Panel Chair will write to the parent(s) advising them of the Panel's decision and the reasons for it, within seven days of reaching the Panel's written conclusions.
- 3.8 These findings, which are final, will also be sent to the Head, the Chair of Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. The findings will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the board of governors and the Headmaster.

**Notes:** The following notes apply to this policy:

- 4.1 Parent(s) can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.
- 4.2 Disclosure may be required in the course of the school's inspection or where any other legal obligation prevails.
- 4.3 Records of complaints in the Early Years Foundation Stage are kept for at least 3 years. All other complaints are kept for a minimum of 2 years. The stage at which a complaint is resolved should be recorded in the written record of complaints.
- 4.4 Parents may make a complaint to Ofsted and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate should they so wish. Contact details for these organisations are as follows:

Ofsted Tel: 0300 123 1231 or [www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/parents)

ISI Tel: 020 7600 0100 or [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)

- 4.5 EYFS Providers

*WRITTEN COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EYFS:* WSNL will provide Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

**COMPLAINTS TO OFSTED REGARDING EYFS SERVICE PROVIDERS:** Parents may also complain directly to Ofsted if they wish. Ofsted may be contacted on

## A14 Complaints

Policy Lead: CET / DJT	Creation date: 1/2/2018	Revision due: Feb 2021
Date of Amendment:	Staff Initials:	
01/03/19	TJH	
29/2/20	CET	

telephone 0300 123 1231; textphone 0161 618 8524; or at Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD. The Independent Schools Inspectorate can be contacted at Ground Floor, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, LONDON EC1A 9HA or telephone 020 7600 0100.

This information is shared with all parents upon their child starting in the EYFS.

### **References:**

A: ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools – The Regulatory Requirements, January 2011 (dated September 2010) ([www.isi.net/](http://www.isi.net/))

B: Boarding Schools: National Minimum Standards from September 2015 ([www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk))

C: The Early Years Foundation Stage: Statutory Framework 2012 ([www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk))

Legal Framework:

General Guidance:

Technological:

Boarding Schools:

### **Appendix:**

---

<sup>i</sup> That is independent of the Governing Body of the Schools.