



**WEST KIRBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

# **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**September 2016**

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## **Complaints Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

The policy of the School is to treat all concerns and complaints seriously and confidentially, in accordance with school procedures.

### **Aims**

West Kirby Grammar School endeavours to provide high standards of teaching and pastoral care. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure. Please note that this procedure is not used for admissions, child protection or exclusion matters, which have their own processes.

## **PRACTICE & PROCEDURE**

### **Stage 1 – Informal**

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a concern/complaint, they should normally contact their daughter/son's Form Tutor, or subject teacher if appropriate. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means, to the parent's satisfaction. If the Form Tutor, or subject teacher, cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to contact the appropriate Head of Year or Head of Department. If the matter is still not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, parents may be referred to Stage 2.

### **Stage 2 – Informal**

If a parent considers their complaint to require immediate senior staff intervention, or the matter could not be resolved at Stage 1, their complaint should be directed to Mrs Cliffe (if the matter is of a pastoral nature) or Mr Scott (if the matter is of an academic nature). At this stage the complaint may be made in writing, by email or by asking for an appointment. The Deputy/Assistant Headteacher will carry out an investigation of the complaint and report to the Headteacher.

Parents will be contacted by Mrs Cliffe or Mr Scott and hopefully the issue will be resolved.

### **Stage 3 – Formal**

All complaints should be made in writing. Should parents not be happy with the resolution suggested, the complaint will then be reported to the Headteacher who may wish to gather further information. The Headteacher will respond to the complaint via email, a meeting or on the telephone.

A full response to the complaint will be provided by the Headteacher within 15 days of the complaint being made to the Headteacher. A written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received will be made and retained. If the matter is not resolved, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint to Stage 4 of the procedure.

Where a complaint relates to the Headteacher, the complaint will progress directly from Stage 1 to Stage 4.

### **Stage 4 – Chair of Governors**

If the complaint cannot be resolved under Stage 1 - 3, then the parents may request that it be considered by the Chair of Governors. Such a request should be put in writing and addressed to the Clerk to the Governors. The Chair will conduct a review of the matter to date. The Chair will report his/her findings to the Headteacher and the parent within 15 school days of receipt of the written request to use the fourth stage.

### **Stage 5 – Complaints Panel of the Governing Body**

If a complaint remains unresolved notwithstanding the previous stages detailed, the complainant may request that the complaint be referred to the Complaints Panel of the Governing Body. A request to use this stage must be put in writing and sent to the Clerk to the Governing Body. Such a request must be sent within 10 school days of the response from the Chair of Governors under Stage 4 being sent to the complainant and must set out briefly the reasons why the complainant is not satisfied with the response.

The Clerk will invite the School to put in writing its response to the complainant's reasons. The School will do this within 15 school days and at the end of that period (whether or not the School has responded), the Clerk will convene a meeting of the Complaints Panel of the Governing Body. That meeting will take place as soon as is reasonably practicable, given the need to find a date which is reasonably convenient for all parties. Whenever possible the meeting will take place within 15 school days of the end of the School's response time. The complainant is entitled to be accompanied by a friend at any meeting but legal representation will not be allowed.

The meeting is not a court case and will be as informal as circumstances allow. The complainant will have the opportunity to put her/his reasons for dissatisfaction and to enlarge on them but may not introduce reasons that were not previously put in writing. The School will have the opportunity to put its side of things and each side, as well as the Panel members, will be able to ask questions. The complainant will have the opportunity to make final comments to the Panel.

The Panel will consist of 3 Governors and one member independent of the running of the school, who have not previously been involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The Panel may make findings and recommendations and a copy of those findings and recommendations will be

- (i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about
- (ii) available for inspection on the School premises

The Panel will formulate its response as quickly as reasonably possible, aiming to do so within 5 school days, and the Clerk to the Governors will notify all concerned.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of 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 where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 requests access to them or where the School is otherwise required by law to disclose them.

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