

Complaints Policy- The King's School

Reviewed October 2018 by Exec with minor wording changes

If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. Matt 18:15

The King's School operates as a partnership with parents. Its ongoing success depends upon good, open communication between parents and the School. Procedures from newsletters to reports are intended to help that process. The extensive involvement of parents in the day-to-day life of the School further aids the communication process. We would generally expect complaints to be submitted to the school within 90 days of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint.

Nonetheless it is recognised that situations can arise which cause parents concern. In such cases the following procedure should be followed:

Stage 1 – Informal

- In the event of a concern, the parents should in most circumstances contact the member of staff immediately responsible for or connected to the incident. The purpose of this communication should be to clarify the facts. Hopefully explanation and restoration can be made at this point within the next three days.
- If this first approach proves to be inappropriate or unacceptable, the parent(s) should then approach the Principal or relevant Head teacher who would seek to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion informally within the next three days.

Stage 2 – Formal, in writing through the school office

- If the parent(s) is/are still not satisfied, then they are to address the matter in writing as a formal complaint to Chair of the School Governors, care of the School office. He/She is to respond to that request as a matter of urgency within 24 hours during school term time.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If a complainant then wishes the matter to be considered further, an independent panel is to meet to consider the complaint. The panel is to convene initially within one month of the formal written complaint being received.
- The panel will comprise: -
 - A representative or representatives of the School Governors.
 - A trustee of Oxfordshire Community Churches or Regional Teams.
 - A member of the local community, appointed by a Senior Pastor of Oxfordshire Community Churches.

The panel must contain at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, and must also contain one panel member who is independent from the management and running of the school.

- All meetings of the panel are to be brought to the attention of:
 - The complainant

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- The Board of Governors
- A Senior Pastor of Oxfordshire Community Churches, or chair of Regional Teams
- The Principal
- The staff members directly affected by the complaint

All of whom are to have at least 48 hours' notice of the panel hearing.

From the first meeting the panel should aim to conduct hearings and will report within a month. The parents are allowed to attend the panel and to be accompanied, if they wish, by someone who is not a legal representative.

While in essence confidential, Panel hearings are to be conducted in such a way, that information presented to the panel is available to all parties concerned, including the parents. Any findings and recommendations of the panel are to be presented in writing. Copies must be given to all directly affected parties, including Chair of Governors, the Principal, staff directly involved and the complainant. Once a formal complaint is received in writing by the Chair of Governors through the school office, written records must be kept and all the relevant outcomes, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceed to a panel hearing.

All correspondence, statements and records of complaints must be kept confidential but must be shown to inspectors when the School is inspected.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

A record of the number of formal written complaints each year is to be available for parents.

The Department for Education

The DfE cannot investigate individual complaints about private schools so a complainant must go through the school's complaints procedure first.

However the DfE has certain powers as a regulator, where the school is not meeting standards set by DfE for:

- education
- pupil welfare and health and safety
- school premises
- staff suitability
- making information available to parents

The DfE consider any reports of a major failure to meet the standards. It can arrange an emergency inspection to look at pupil welfare and health and safety, and make sure serious failings are dealt with.

For minor complaints, the DfE can ask the school inspectorates to take these into account when the school is next inspected.

If a complainant is unhappy with the procedures or outcomes and wishes to inform inspectors of ISI or the DfE, they are welcome to do so.

ISI can be contacted by telephone on 02076000100 or by email at concerns@isi.net

No formal complaints were made in the year 2017-2018