



2.15 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (33a)

Queen Mary's School Complaints Procedure is written in accordance with the **(ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, Commentary of the Regulatory Requirements, September 2016)**.

Queen Mary's School will always act with integrity and will act justly and compassionately in handling any complaints from parents of pupils. The School recognises that, "Any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school is now a complaint, and in the scope of the procedure, whatever the school labels it as". (ISI Regulatory Requirements 2016)

This Complaints Procedure, containing information about the complaints procedure is available to all parents via the School's website.

The School aims to deal quickly and effectively with all complaints. Parents who make a complaint can expect to receive acknowledgement of their complaint within 24 hours during term time and within 7 working days during the holidays. Queen Mary's School will, where possible, aim to address a parental complaint and have the matter resolved within 5 working days.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Complaints to be considered on an informal basis

- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher/Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher / Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head of Department, Head of Key Stage, Director of Studies or Deputy Head. A dated record of the complaint and action taken should be sent to the Head, the pupil's central file and a copy kept in the informal complaints file.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Head of Key Stage, Director of Studies or Deputy Head may be referred to the relevant subject teacher or it may be appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. The person dealing with the complaint will keep a dated, written record of the complaint and action taken to resolve the matter. The pupil's tutor should be informed and a dated record of the complaint and action taken should be sent to the Head to the pupil's central file and a copy put in the informal complaints file.
- Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or in the event that the person dealing with the complaint and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents may proceed to the first formal stage of the complaints procedure.

Stage 2: First Formal stage of the Complaints procedure

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 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 ask the Deputy Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head /Deputy Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established and evaluated, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for her decision.
- If parents are not satisfied with the Head's decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 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 Mrs Sue Ford who has been appointed by the Governors 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 three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The ISI Regulatory Requirements 2016 references the DFE guidance:

“Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force might be considered.”

The School has such suitable persons it may contact to act as an independent member of the panel.

- The Chair of Governors, or Mrs Sue Ford on his behalf, will appoint all panel members. The Board of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days.
- A parent is allowed to attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

- The Panel will make its findings and recommendations and ensure that a copy of those findings and recommendations is provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and available for inspection on the school premises by the governors and the Head. Queen Mary's School will aim to issue the above information within 7 days of the hearing.

Complaints in the EYFS

Queen Mary's School will adhere to the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017. Please see statement below.

“Providers must put in place a written procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents and/or carers, and must keep a written record of any complaints, and their outcome. All providers must investigate written complaints relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted on request”. (Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2017)

Records and Actions

Queen Mary's School will keep a record of all formal complaints and panel hearings. The records will state whether or not the complaint has been resolved following a formal procedure or has proceeded to a panel hearing. The record will also outline the action taken by the School.

Confidentiality

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Complaints 2015-2016

During the Academic Year 2015/16 there have been 12 instances of complaints.

Mrs Carole Cameron
Head

September 2016
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