

## HEATHLAND SCHOOL COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Policy reviewed – Sept 2020

Policy presented to SLT – Sept 2020

Due for review – Sept 2022

### Introduction

High standard of teaching and pastoral care are paramount in the School's aims. Parents are encouraged to be in close liaison with staff and in particular with Form Tutors and Teachers over their children's welfare and it is hoped that all can work together for the pupil's benefit. This policy explains how you are able to both compliment the School and also raise any complaints that you have.

### Compliments

A folder of your thank-you letters will be kept in the main office area and this helps to demonstrate the school's commitment to high standards and service. When compliments are received, the following procedure is completed:

1. When a compliment is received it will be sent to the Directors and filed in the School Office.
2. A letter is sent to the originator of the compliment thanking them for giving the compliment.
3. If appropriate, we may ask that the compliment letter be placed on display.

### Complaints

However, should parents have a complaint, they can expect it to be dealt with in a professional manner and in accordance with procedures set out in this document.

#### Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

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

If parents have a complaint they should in the first instance contact the member of staff concerned, the Form Tutor, Subject Teacher or other member staff. In many cases this will lead to the problem being resolved. A written record of all complaints will be made by the member of staff on the day on which they were received.

In the event the complaint cannot be resolved by the teacher, the Head of primary/secondary/ member of the Senior leader Team will be happy to speak to parents on an informal basis to help achieve a solution. Any action taken will be confirmed in writing.

This process should normally be completed within 7 days. Should the matter not be resolved within this time scale, the Headteacher will be consulted and if a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

### Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Directors. The Directors will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

The Directors will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Directors are satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Directors will also give reasons for the decision. This process would normally be completed within 28 days.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision they should 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 an independent advisor who has been appointed by the Directors 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 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. Mr John Lewin, Ex-Head of Towerdene School has agreed to act as an independent person for a Complaints Panel Hearing. The other panel members shall be appointed by the Directors. The Independent Advisor, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 7 days.

If the panel deem it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter to be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaints 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 which it shall complete within 3 days of the hearing. The panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing to the parents and the Directors. Where relevant, the person to whom the complaint refers will receive a copy. The panel's decision will be final. Stage 3 process would normally be completed within 28 days.

Parents can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept, whether they are resolved in the early stages or proceed to a panel hearing. All 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.

A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made at a formal or panel hearing level, along with action taken by the school as a result of any complaint. These records will be kept in a Complaints File.

#### EYFS

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request. Details on request are to be provided to parents if they so wish. Parents are free to complain to Ofsted 0845 6014772 or ISI on 020 7600 0100.

#### Contact Details

Mr John Lewin, Independent Advisor, Heathland School. Tel: 01254 234284

Directors, Mr & Mrs Harrison, Talbot Street, Southport Tel: 01200 234284