



Cundall Manor School

## Complaints Policy 2023

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## Complaints Procedure

This policy is a ‘whole-school’ policy and relates to EYFS through to the Senior School. All complaints will be dealt with in confidence. The Complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to current pupils, all staff and boarders. The complaints procedure applies to past students only if the complaint was first raised whilst the student was still registered. It is available on the website.

### Introduction

Cundall Manor School prides itself on the quality of the teaching, learning and pastoral care provided to its pupils; We regard parents as essential and valued members of our community, and aim for open and easy communication between home and school. However, if for any reason parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

‘Working Day’ refers to days when the school timetable is in operation (including Saturdays and Leave Weekends at the senior school); it does not therefore include school holidays.

### What Constitutes a Complaint?

Any matter about which a parent, member of staff or current pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School is a complaint and will be addressed in accordance with this policy. In this respect, it is anticipated that the large majority of complaints will be resolved at the informal stage.

The school will keep records of complaints which are resolved at the informal stage for management purposes, for example to enable patterns or trends to be monitored. A formal written and/or electronic record is kept of complaints made to the school which reach the formal stage. Details will be recorded of;

- whether the complaint was resolved following the formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing;
- action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

Records are kept for at least three years. The school will provide ISI and Ofsted, 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.

### Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

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

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means, to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Assistant Head responsible for the phase of the school or Deputy Head.

Complaints made directly to the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher/Assistant Head/ Deputy Head unless the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Form teacher/Assistant Head/Deputy Head will make a written record of all concerns and complaints. Should the matter not be resolved within 14 working days or in the event that the Form teacher/Assistant Head and the parent(s) fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with a written complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

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

The Headmaster or Deputy Head will meet the parents concerned, within 7 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. Further conversations and correspondence may ensue, as appropriate. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headmaster or Deputy Head to carry out further investigations.

The Headmaster or Deputy Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headmaster is 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 within 7 working days. The Headmaster will also give reasons for the decisions made.

A written record of this decision will be kept in the Complaints Log along with any actions taken by the school as a result of the complaint, whether or not the complaint was upheld.

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 correspond with 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.

If parents are not satisfied with the decision, they should give notice that they wish to proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure within 28 working days.

If an initial complaint is sent to the Governors, it will be forwarded to the Headmaster in order for the above procedure to operate.

## **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents of day or boarding pupils seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Business Manager 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 be appointed by the Governors and consist of three people who have not directly been involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Business Manager, on behalf

of the Panel, will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days. Parents should note that the Complaints Panel will not normally sit during school holidays.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 5 working 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 appropriate in a hearing of this nature. If parents do not exercise their right to attend a panel hearing the hearing will still go ahead as arranged and consider the complaint.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, normally within 14 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final.

### **Persistent correspondence**

Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this can be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of this policy.

### **Record of Complaints**

A written record will be kept of all complaints that reach stage 2 or 3 of the procedure regardless of whether they are upheld. The record will include details of the action taken by the school and whether the complaints are resolved at Stage 2 or proceed to a Panel hearing. A copy of those findings and recommendations will be:

- (i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about
- (ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will 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. With regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage, Cundall Manor School will provide Ofsted and/or ISI, 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 complaints will be kept for at least three years.

### **OFSTED can be contacted at the following address:**

**Ofsted,**  
Piccadilly Gate,  
Store Street,  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
General helpline 0300 123 1231

### **ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) can be contacted at:**

Independent Schools Inspectorate,  
Ground Floor,  
CAP House,  
9-12 Long Lane,  
Educational & Pastoral (Complaints)  
London  
EC1A 9HA  
Telephone 020 7600 0100

## Complaints Concerning Child Welfare in Boarding

Boarders and their parents can, for any complaints concerning child welfare in boarding, contact Ofsted by calling 0300 123 4666 or e-mailing [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk). They can also contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (Craven & Harrogate area) by calling 01609 534 974

A written record is kept of all serious complaints and their outcomes. All records of complaints made under this policy will be retained at the School for a minimum of 7 years from the date of resolution/conclusion thereof and indefinitely if the complaint relates to a safeguarding issue. This also applies to any complaints in respect of boarding. The written record of serious complaints and their outcomes is regularly reviewed by the Head or a senior member of staff. Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay.

Schools are required to publish the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year. The number of complaints dealt with at this stage in 2022-23 was zero.

## Complaints during school holidays

Any complaints received during the school holidays should be directed via [hmpa@cundallmanor.org.uk](mailto:hmpa@cundallmanor.org.uk)

Complaints will be acknowledged as soon as is practicable. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as promptly as possible and will be investigated as soon as is practicable during holiday periods.

## Complaints by Pupils

Staff should be fully aware of the Pupil Complaints Procedure.

The policy delivered below is written as a direct correspondence to the pupil(s).

This policy is for your use. It explains what you can do should you feel particularly worried about something and what you may do if you wish to complain about how you are, or have been, treated. It is important that you read this policy carefully and ask a trusted person for help if you don't understand it. They will explain it to you.

There are two things to remember:

1. You may wish just to talk to someone, or
2. You may wish to make a complaint.

Either way, this policy will assist you to decide what to do.

What do I do if I just want to talk to someone?

Remember you have close friends who may be able to help, or an older boy/girl to whom you feel you can turn. For boarders your boarding house staff or the matron are always ready to help or any other member of staff you know and to whom you feel you can comfortably talk.

There may be times when you feel you can't talk with a member of staff - this is perfectly all right. Then you can talk, telephone or write to any of the following:

- your parents
- the School Counsellor
- Childline
- Put a note in the worries box in the entrance hall

Their addresses and telephone numbers are given at the end of this policy.

## What happens if you want to make a complaint about something?

Sometimes you may feel that you would like to complain about something that is worrying you. The first thing you should do is to speak to any member of staff you trust (e.g. your form tutor or a member of the boarding house staff); you can have a friend with you if you wish, another pupil or another member of staff. If you wish to speak to someone outside of the school, Robert Sidgwick has agreed to be available to speak to any pupil who might wish to do so. Her number is available from the school office.

If the matter can't easily be settled to your satisfaction then you can make the complaint formal. Then the following will happen:

You can do this in writing, addressing your letter to the Head, or orally by telling the member of staff you have spoken to about your problem.

1. The complaint will be entered in the Complaint Book held by the Head, then
2. You will get a note from the Head saying that she has seen the complaint and that it will be attended to within five school days of you making the complaint, then
3. You will be asked to talk the matter through with either the Assistant Head, Deputy Head or the Head and you can have a friend with you, who may be another pupil, a boarding house member of staff, form tutor or any member of staff. If, within two more days, you have not had the matter satisfactorily sorted out, you may contact any of the people whose names are listed above and whose addresses and telephone numbers appear at the end of this policy.
4. Whoever you contact will speak to you at the school, again you can have a friend with you. They will advise you about what course seems sensible. At this stage it will be up to you to make a decision, acting on his/her advice.

No pupil will be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

#### TELEPHONE NUMBERS & CONTACT DETAILS OF PEOPLE YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT:

CHILDLINE 0800 1111

Mrs Riddell dianeriddell@cundallmanor.org.uk

ACCESS TO A DOCTOR During the day Ripon Minor Injuries Unit  
Out of hours 111/999

Independent Listener Robert Sidgwick,

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