



Royal Russell

WHOLE SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (INCLUDING EARLY YEARS)

This procedure applies to parents of current and former pupils of the school.

Royal Russell School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a concern or complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure. The Complaints Procedure is published on the School's website for easy access by parents.

This document gives you guidance in how to draw our attention to any issues you would like addressed. The School is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and ideas. Each year you will have Parents' Evenings when you can discuss your child's progress with their teachers; you are also encouraged to speak to staff with concerns at any other time.

We wish to ensure that:

- Parents wishing to contact the School know how to do so
- We respond to parents in a courteous and efficient way
- Parents realise that we listen and respond to their comments in a positive fashion
- We take action where appropriate.

HOW SHOULD I CONTACT THE SCHOOL?

You can arrange to talk to the appropriate member of staff, write a letter, telephone or email the School.

Senior School

- Telephone messages can be left with the Senior School Office who may be able to arrange appointments to meet staff. Tel: 020 8657 4433 extension 320 or email mmorgan@royalrussell.co.uk
Alternatively you may be able to be put through to a specific extension to leave a message for the relevant member of staff.
- The Headmaster's telephone number is 020 8657 3669
- The Headmaster's email address is headmaster@royalrussell.co.uk
- Staff email addresses: first initial and surname followed by @royalrussell.co.uk

Junior School

- Telephone messages can be left with the Junior School Secretary who may be able to arrange appointments to meet staff. Tel: 020 8651 5884 or email juniorschool@royalrussell.co.uk
- The Junior School Headmaster's telephone number is 020 8651 5884
- The Junior School Headmaster's email address is juniorschool@royalrussell.co.uk
- Staff email addresses: first initial and surname followed by @royalrussell.co.uk

Governors

- The Chair of Governors can be contacted on clerktogovernors@royalrussell.co.uk
- The Clerk to the Governors email address is clerktogovernors@royalrussell.co.uk
- The Clerk to the Governors telephone number is 020 8657 4433 extension 203.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

We will always try to resolve concerns or complaints to your satisfaction. If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your

satisfaction. In some circumstances, the person may need time to discuss the issues with others before informing you of an outcome.

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 the person most closely associated with the issue.

Senior School

Issue:

Academic
Pastoral & Disciplinary Matter
Sport Concerns
Music Concerns

Initial Contact:

Teacher concerned or Tutor
Housemaster/Housemistress
Director of Sport
Director of Music

The Senior School Deputy Heads will be more than happy to meet with you if you feel this is more appropriate.

Junior School

Issue:

Academic/Pastoral/Discipline
Sport Concerns
Music Concerns

Initial Contact:

Class Teacher or Phase Leader
Head of Boys Sport, Head of Girls Sport
Head of Music

The Junior School Deputy Heads or Junior School Headmaster will be more than happy to meet with you if you feel this is more appropriate.

Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, the Deputy Heads or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant initial contact shown above unless the Head of Department, the Deputy Heads or the Headmaster (Senior or Junior as appropriate) deem it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The initial contact will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 2 weeks or in the event that the initial contact, the Head of Department, Deputy Head and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then 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, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the relevant Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

The Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, within 7 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. In the School holidays, the complaint will be acknowledged and an appropriate time scale agreed with the parents for a response.

If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

If it is necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations, the parents will be informed of the timescale for this process.

The Headmaster may consult with an appropriate member of the Governing Board to assist with the resolution of the complaint at this stage.

The Headmaster 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 within two weeks of the receipt of the 'Stage 2' complaint and

parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his/her decision.

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 should make this request within two weeks of the outcome of 'Stage 2' to the Clerk to the Governors at the School address. They will be referred to the Chair of Governors 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 three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of whom shall be a person independent of the School. The Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place within 21 term time days. If the complaint is received in a period leading into or during the School holidays, the Complaints Panel will be convened at the beginning of the following term.

Once the Panel is convened, they will ask for a report on the complaint to be written by the Headmaster. If the Headmaster is directly involved in the complaint, the Panel will commission a report from an independent person.

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 normally not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.

The parent(s) may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. A written record of the meeting will be taken by a representative of the School and this will form the 'minutes' of the meeting which will be shared with the parent(s). The parent(s) may request amendments on points of factual accuracy; other comments on the minutes may be appended if they are not incorporated.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint 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 make findings and may make recommendations.

The Panel will write to the parent(s) informing them of the decision and the reasons for it, normally within 7 days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings, recommendations (if any) and minutes from the meeting will be sent in writing, by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parent(s), and, where relevant, the person complained about as well as the Headmaster and Chair of Governors.

A copy of the Panel findings and any recommendations will be kept in the School for review and inspection by the Chair of Governors and the Headmaster.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

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

All written complaints about the EYFS will be recorded and made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

EXCLUSIONS

This complaints procedure can also be used by parents to express their concerns or to complain about the exclusion of a pupil from the school.

RECORDING COMPLAINTS

Following resolution of a complaint, the School will keep a written record of all complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

At the School's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage

Copies of all correspondence relating to individual complaints (including emails and records of phone conversations, 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.

The School will provide Ofsted 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 such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

Parents may also complain directly to Ofsted if they wish. Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 4666. Where a complaint relates to boarding matters, parents can contact ISI directly concerning child welfare on 020 7710 9900 or concerns@isi.net

Complaints at Stage 2 and Stage 3 are reviewed by Governors at the termly meeting of the Strategy and Remuneration Committee (SARC).

There were 12 complaints received by the School, during the Academic Year 2017 – 2018, which reached stage 2 or stage 3 of this procedure.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The European Directives on Alternative Dispute Resolution and Online Dispute Resolution, became effective from 1 October 2015. Parents who have exhausted the School procedures described above, may wish to follow this route.



A J Merriman
Chair of Governors



C J Hutchinson
Headmaster

Reviewed and Approved by Board	March 2019
Next Review	September 2019

The Department for Education document [“Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2019”](#) gives further advice on School complaints procedures.