



YORK HOUSE

Complaints Procedure Policy

Reviewed September 2025

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Introduction

York House School had long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if families do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

This policy is intended for parents of families.

Aim: The aim of this policy is to ensure that a concern or complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level, and resolved as soon as possible.

Policy Status: This policy provides guidelines for the handling of concerns and complaints. Certain elements of the procedure can only be carried out during term time.

Guidance for parents: The overarching principle is that if a parent has a concern or complaint, they should inform us about it as soon as possible. Most concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking to the appropriate member of staff. If you are dissatisfied with the response you have received you can write to the Headmaster of York House School, who will conduct an investigation and you will receive a written response. If the complaint is still unresolved after writing to the Head, you should write to the Chairman of Governors.

Please raise the concern initially as follows:-

A concern about the safety of your child should be notified immediately to the person you believe is best placed to take urgent action and should be confirmed in writing to Designated Senior Person (See Child Protection Policy).

Education issues - if the matter relates to the classroom, the curriculum or Special Educational Needs, please speak or write to the Teacher, Head of Department or other senior member of staff such as the Deputy Head Academic.

Pastoral care - for concerns relating to matters outside the classroom, please speak or write to the relevant Form Tutor or SLT member.

Disciplinary matters - a problem over disciplinary action taken or sanction imposed should be raised first of all with the member of staff who imposed it and, if not resolved, with a member of the SLT.

Financial matters - a query relating to fees or extras should be raised with the Bursar.

Other complaints: any other complaints that do not fall into these categories should be taken up with the appropriate member of staff, or the Head if necessary.

Acknowledgement: The School will acknowledge any notification of a written complaint within 3 working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable in the holidays. A matter raised orally will not necessarily be acknowledged in writing.

Complaints still unresolved after consultation with the Head can be referred, in writing, to the Chair of the Board of Governors who will convene a Complaints Panel to investigate the complaint.

Record Keeping: Part of this process includes the action taken by a school as a result of the complaint.

The Procedure

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 or the teacher of the subject concerned. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway, by this means, to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher or subject teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Department, (subject or section) or other senior member of staff in the school.

Complaints made directly to a senior member of staff or even the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher or subject teacher, unless the member of staff contacted deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Form Teacher or subject teacher 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 3 working days or in the event that the Form Teacher or subject teacher 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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headmaster will meet with or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 3 normal, school, working 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations. Except in particularly unusual

circumstances, the Headmaster would expect to respond to parents with 14 normal, school, working days of receiving the written complaint.

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

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of the Procedure. This will mean that the complaint has reached the stage of a Governors' Committee.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Parents not satisfied with the decision may write to the Headmaster and/or the Chairman of Governors and request a panel hearing.

- 1) The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One member of the Panel shall be independent of the management and running of the school and the other two shall be selected from the Board of Governors. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, who shall also nominate a Chairman of the Panel. The Clerk to Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint in writing within 10 working days and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 days of the Clerk to Governor's written acknowledgement.
- 2) 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 days prior to the hearing. Similarly, where the parents or guardians wish the Panel to consider any further written material, then this should be supplied within the same time period.
- 3) The parents or guardians may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The parents or guardians must inform the Clerk to the Governors, at least 2 days in advance, if they intend to be accompanied, by whom and in what role. The accompanying person is attending as a witness and support, they are not permitted to contribute to the proceedings.
- 4) If the parents or guardians are to be accompanied, then any staff member involved may also be accompanied by a relative, teacher or friend.

- 5) If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' or guardians' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out and will inform the complainee of the nature of the investigation and the anticipated timescales.
- 6) After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 30 days of the Hearing. In the case of a complaint involving the EYFS this will be completed within 28 days of the initial written indication of a panel hearing request being received by the Chairman.
- 7) The Panel can:
- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
 - Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
 - Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
 - Recommend changes to the School's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.
- 8) The Panel will send a copy of their findings and recommendations by electronic mail or otherwise to the parents or guardians informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. A copy will also be sent, where necessary, to the person / member complained about. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise to the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors and, where relevant, the person concerning whom the complaint had been made. A copy of the decision and findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and Headmaster.
- 9) Recommendations, if any, will be discussed with the Headmaster and the Chair of Governors.
- 10) Records will be held in the Complaints Register. This will indicate the resolutions and whether or not the complaint has proceeded to a panel hearing. All records, statements and correspondence will be held confidentially for a period of at least three years.
- 11) The record keeping of complaints must include action taken by the school regardless of whether the complaint is upheld
- 12) The record keeping will provide an overview of complaints so that senior staff can link together or find patterns with complaints.
- Parents and guardians can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by the Secretary of State, where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection, or where any other

legal obligation prevails. Access to a body conducting and inspection is under Section 109 of the 2008 Act

Provision of Information: the number of complaints is made available to parents/prospective parents and on request to the chief inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate such as Ofsted or ISI

Early Years Foundation Stage Complaints

The school is required following the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework in September 2008 to inform parents that they may make a complaint to Ofsted and/or ISI, who inspect the EYFS on behalf of Ofsted info@isi.net

Please see: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-parents-and-carers/how-complain> in respect of the school's EYFS provision, should they wish to do so and that a record of any such complaint would be kept for at least three years.

NB: Written complaints should be fully investigated within 28 days

The school keeps records of any complaints that have been formally raised – i.e. at Stage 2 or 3 of this Policy.

Signed by:



Headmaster

Date: September 2025

Signed by



Chair of Governors

Date: September 2025

Please see the Policy Review Matrix for the next review date