



CHARD SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Chard School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child'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 with the Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head will be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless it is deemed inappropriate to do so, in which case the Head will deal with the matter personally.
- The Form 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 one week or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with the 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.
- If the matter concerns the day-to-day running of the school, the interpretation of the school policies or the actions/inactions of a staff member at the school, then the parent should write to the Head.
- If the matter concerns school policies as determined by the Board of Trustees, the action/inactions of the Board of Trustees or the actions/inactions of the Head, then parents should write to the Chair of the Trustees.
- The Head or Chair will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head or Chair will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five 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 Head or Chair to carry out further subsequent investigations.
- Once the Head or Chair 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. Reasons will be given for the decision. If the parents are 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 failure to reach an earlier resolution at Stage 1 or Stage 2), they will be referred to the Chair of Trustees (if the Head investigated Stage 2) or another nominated member of the Board of Trustees (if the Chair investigated Stage 2).
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of two members of the Board of Trustees plus a third person not directly involved in the running of the school. Neither of the Trustees will have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. The Chair of the Trustees or the nominated Trustee, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and arrange a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fifteen working days.
- If necessary, the Panel may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter are supplied to all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, parent or friend.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten working days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Chair of the Trustees and, where relevant, the person complained of.
- The Head or Chair will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, whether the complaint is resolved following a formal procedure or panel hearing, and record will be kept of the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, regardless of whether it was upheld.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them. The record of any formal complaint will be kept for three years.

There number of complaints made in the school year 2014 – 2015 can be obtained from the Head.

Last Reviewed: January 2017
Next Review Due: January 2018