

**Packwood Haugh School**

**(Including EYFS)**

**Complaints Procedure**

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| **Authorised by the Governing Body**: Yes Date: 12/10/2020 |
| **Produced by**: Sue Rigby 01/10/2020 |
| **Date Disseminated to the Staff via the intranet**: 02/09/2020 |
| **Date of Review:** 12/10/2021 |
| **Signed:** Tim Haynes, Chair of Governors |

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

* **Complaints**

As required, by the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 (Part 7; ISSR 33) and Boarding Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding, there is a Complaints Procedure at Packwood.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Packwood Haugh School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that they might raise. A complaint will always be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which requires a response. We wish to ensure that:

* + parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
  + we are able to resolve concerns and complaints informally where at all possible
  + we respond to complaints quickly and in a courteous and efficient manner
  + parents realise that we take complaints seriously
  + we take action where appropriate.

This procedure should not be invoked where a complaint is against expulsion or removal of a pupil from the school when parents should request a review of the Headmaster’s decision under the review procedure.

* **Informal procedure for complaints (Stage 1)**

Sometimes specific complaints need to be directed to specific people. The list below cannot be exhaustive and if in doubt please contact the school. At all times parents have the right to raise complaints with the Headmaster should they wish to do so.

**Education issues –** In the first instance please contact the pupil’s Form Tutor, or if more appropriate the Head of Department.

**Pastoral issues –** If the matter relates to something occurring in the classroom then please speak to the Form Tutor but if it is an issue to do with boarding then please contact the House Parents.

**Financial and administrative matters** – A query relating to fees or extras or to other administrative matters should be raised with the Bursar.

**Medical Matters** – Complaints about medical matters should be referred in the first instance to the School Nurse.

**Complaint about a Member of Staff** – If a complaint relates to a member of staff, it is always helpful if the matter can be raised first with the member of staff concerned. Should that prove difficult or impossible the Headmaster should be contacted.

**Response to an informal complaint**

As a general point, staff will always try to be in a position to take and respond to telephone calls. However this is not always possible and they may reply by email.

All complaints should receive a response within two working days during term time and as soon as practicable in the holidays. A matter raised orally will not necessarily be acknowledged in writing but will be recorded by the person dealing with the matter.

A written record is kept of all complaints and the date on which they were received, the record is kept centrally by the Headmaster. The stage of resolution will be recorded on the complaint record (informal, formal or at a panel hearing).

* **Formal procedure for complaints (Stage 2)**

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, it should be made to the Headmaster in writing, and the Headmaster will respond within seven days. The acknowledgement will indicate the action that is being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.

Again a written record will be kept of all meetings and discussions. The record will provide a brief summary of the name of the complainant, the date the complaint was received, the matter complained of, and the manner and date of its resolution. Written records will also be kept of any meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

The Headmaster will notify the parents of his decision in writing, and will give reasons for his decision.

Any complainant will be notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of the school having received the complaint.

Please note that any complaint received during the School holidays or within one month of the end of term or half term is likely to take longer to resolve owing to the presence of the school holidays and the unavailability of personnel.

If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the Headmaster or the Bursar under Stage 2, the parents can request that the complaint be referred to the Complaints Panel under Stage 3.

* **Referral to the Review Panel (Stage 3)**

**Role of the Panel -** The Panel’s task is to establish the facts surrounding the complaint that has been made by considering:

* + the documents provided by both parties and
  + any representations made by you, the Headmaster or the Bursar, as appropriate and to reach a decision as to whether the complaint is made out in whole or in part. If the Panel consider that the complaint is not made out, they will dismiss the complaint. They will make these decisions on the balance of probabilities.

It is not within the power of the Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, pupils or parents. The Panel may make recommendations on these or any other issues to the Headmaster or the full body of Governors as appropriate.

**Referral to the panel** – Only if you have been through the earlier stages of this procedure, and are dissatisfied with the decision that has been notified to you by the Headmaster or the Bursar may you request a final hearing by a Review Panel.

To request a hearing before the Review Panel, please write to the Clerk to the Governors within five working days of the decision complained of. Your request will only be considered if you have completed the relevant procedures at Stages 1 and 2. Please ensure that copies of all relevant documents accompany your letter to the Clerk, and state all the grounds for your complaint and the outcome that you desire. The Clerk will acknowledge your request in writing within five working days.

**The Panel Meeting** – A Panel meeting will be convened within 14 days of the receipt of the request or as soon as is reasonably practicable but the Panel will not normally sit during the School holidays. The Panel will be made up of at least three members, not directly involved with the complaint, and will not include the Chairman of the Governors. One member of the Panel will be independent of the management and the running of the School.

The proceedings will be chaired by one member of the Panel. The seating will be arranged so far, that as is practicable, everyone present can see and speak to each other without difficulty. However, at the Chairman’s discretion, a sequential hearing may be chosen.

The Clerk will send you written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, together with brief details of the Panel members who will be present, as soon as is reasonably practicable, and in any event at least five working days before the hearing.

**Attendance** - Parents are entitled to attend and may be accompanied by one other person such as a relative or friend. The Panel hearing is not legal proceedings and so legal representation is not necessary. If you do wish to be accompanied by a legally qualified person, please notify the School at least five working days before the hearing and note that the Panel will wish to speak to you directly and this person will not be permitted to act as an advocate. The Clerk to the Governors will also attend the hearing in order to keep a record of the proceedings. Copies of additional documents you wish the Panel to consider should be sent to the Clerk at least five working days prior to the hearing. The Clerk will circulate a copy of the bundle of documents to be considered by the Panel to all parties at least three days prior to the hearing.

It is the task of the Panel to look at issues in an impartial and confidential manner.

**Decision** – The Chairman will inform you in writing or by electronic mail (whichever is the most convenient) of the Panel’s decision, findings and any recommendations within ten working days. Where relevant the person complained about will also receive a copy of the Panel’s decision, findings and any recommendations. The decisions, findings and any recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governing Body and the Headmaster.

* **Confidentiality of complaints**

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at which Stage or proceed to a panel hearing. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 7(33)(k) of the Regulations 2014 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.

Formal complaints during the Academic Year 2019-2020: One

* Should parents of pupils at Packwood have any concerns about their child’s welfare which they do not feel have been resolved satisfactorily by the school, they may choose to contact:

ISI\* or Designated Officer

CAP House Ellie Jones

9-12 Long Lane Shropshire’s Safeguarding Board

London Independent Review Unit

EC1A 9HA Mount McKinley, Anchorage Avenue,

Tel: 020 7600 0100 Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY2 6FG

www.isi.net Tel: 01743 254 259/254 246

\*Independent Schools Inspectorate sscb@shropshire.gov.uk

For parents of Early Years Foundation Stage the address for Ofsted is as follows:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Textphone number: 0161 618 8524

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