



Complaints Policy

(Whole School Including EYFS)

First Issued:	September 2003	Next Review:	Autumn Term 2021
Last Reviewed:	Autumn Term 2020	Version:	4.0
Responsible:	Headmaster and Director of Operations		

1. Introduction

- a. Orley Farm School ('the School') reserves the right not to follow this procedure if:
 - I. The pupil is no longer registered as an Orley Farm pupil, unless, the complaint was initially raised while they were still enrolled.
 - II. Time has elapsed, as considered by the Headmaster or Director of Operations between the events complained of and the complaint being presented.

(This policy is however, applicable to former pupils, if they have been excluded and the complaint relates to their exclusion.)

- b. The 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 with care and in accordance with this procedure. The School makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils, and of prospective pupils, on the school's website and a copy is available from the school office during the school day. The School will ensure that parents of pupils, and of prospective pupils, who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and of the form in which it is published or available.
- c. In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, The School will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, as stated on the final page of this policy.

2. What Constitutes a Complaint?

- a. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff, and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the school is within the scope of this procedure. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, failed to do something that it should have done or has acted unfairly.
- b. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The School is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you or your child raises in good faith.

3. The three-stage Complaints Procedure

- a. **Stage 1 - Informal Resolution**
 - I. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally directly with the person concerned. Clearly, the nature of complaints will vary but from the moment that the School is made aware of a complaint the initial aim would be to address this speedily and within a week of it being made.
 - II. If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their son or daughter's Form Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult with their Head of Department, Head of

Section, Year Group Lead, the Deputy Head(s), the Headmaster or the Director of Operations.

- III. Complaints made directly to a Head of Department, Head of Section, Year Group Lead, the Deputy Head(s), the Headmaster or the Director of Operations will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor unless the Head of Department, the Deputy Head(s), Head of Section, Year Group Lead, the Headmaster or Director of Operations deems it appropriate for him or her to deal with the matter personally.
- IV. The Form Tutor will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received.
- V. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or in the event that the Form Tutor 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.
- VI. If, however, the complaint is against the Headmaster or Directors of Finance and Operations, parents should address their complaint in writing directly to the Chairman of Governors c/o Orley Farm School, South Hill Avenue, Harrow HA1 3NU.

b. Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

- I. If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster or Director of Operations. The Headmaster or Director of Operations will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- II. In most cases, the Headmaster or Director of Operations will meet or speak to the parents concerned, within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- III. It may be necessary for the Headmaster or Director of Operations to carry out further investigations in which case the complainant will be informed of the likely time scale of the investigations.
- IV. The Headmaster or Director of Operations will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- V. Once the Headmaster or Director of Operations are 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 or Director of Operations will also give reasons for their decision.
- VI. If the complaint is against the Headmaster or Directors of Finance and Operations, the Chairman of Governors will call for a full report from the Headmaster or Directors of Finance and Operations and for all the relevant documents. The Chairman may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chairman 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 Chairman will give reasons for his decision.
- VII. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

c. Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- I. If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to The Chairman of the Board of Governors who shall call a hearing of the Complaints Panel.
- II. The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of no fewer than three persons appointed by the Board of Governors and not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. The Chairman on behalf of the panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place normally within 10 working days.
- III. 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.
- IV. The parents 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.
- V. 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.
- VI. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will make findings and may make recommendations.
- VII. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, within five working days of the hearing (although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following the hearing). The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) may be sent by electronic mail, post or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about, the Chairman of Governors, and the Headmaster will also receive a copy of the findings.
- VIII. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chairman of Governors and the Headmaster, ISI or Ofsted Inspectors in the course of their duties.

4. Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

- a. All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within 5 working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.
- b. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 20 working days. Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 20 working days.
- c. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.
- d. Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure, 'working days' refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time.

5. Recording Complaints

- a. Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written electronic record of all complaints, whether they are resolved at the informal stage, the formal stage or proceed to a panel hearing and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld). At the School's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:
 - I. Date when the issue was raised;
 - II. Name of parent;
 - III. Name of pupil;
 - IV. Description of the issue;
 - V. Records of all the investigations (if appropriate);
 - VI. Witness statements (if appropriate);
 - VII. Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage; and
 - VIII. Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)
 - b. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.
 - c. The School will provide ISI and Ofsted, on request, with a written and/or electronic 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.
- 6. Parents may complain directly to Ofsted or to ISI if they believe that the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements.**

- a. Ofsted may be contacted at:

Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

<https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/online-complaints-schools>

- b. ISI may be contacted at:

ISI, CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London EC1A 9HA

Telephone: 020 7600 0100
Email: concerns@isi.net

Formal Complaints (Stage 2 or 3) during the academic year 2018- 2019 = 2

Formal Complaints (Stage 2 or 3) during the academic year 2019- 2020 = 0