



## **COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS PROCEDURE**

This policy is made available to the parents of all pupils and of all prospective pupils on our website; copies may also be requested from the Headmaster's Office. Staff can also find the policy in the Staff Handbook and the Boarding House Handbook.

Tettenhall College welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may arise. We also welcome feedback from parents when they are content/delighted with the School.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response.

- ✓ We wish to ensure that:
- ✓ Parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- ✓ We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- ✓ Parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- ✓ We take action where appropriate.

There are 3 stages to the complaints procedure:

1. Informal
2. Formal
3. Governors' Panel

### **1. Informal**

#### **“How should I complain?”**

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you. A written record will be made of all complaints and the date on which they were received. An initial response will be made within 24 hours.

Any member of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, to raise boarding matters with the Housemaster or Housemistress, academic issues with the Form Teacher or Tutor, sports concerns with the Head of PE. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss.

#### **“I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”**

The School is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

### **“I am not sure whether to complain or not”**

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to complain. If in doubt, you should contact the school as we are here to help.

### **“What will happen next?”**

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction. Your initial contact will most often be responded to by the person most closely concerned with the issue but a Senior Manager will have been made aware within 48 hours of the concern being raised. A Senior Manager will follow up the initial concern at the end of the process to ensure a satisfactory resolution has been found. However, if you are not satisfied you should put your complaint in writing to the Headmaster.

## **2. Formal**

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the Headmaster will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. Written records will be kept of these discussions. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

For the EYFS the record of complaints will be kept for at least 3 years and as our provision is registered we are also required to provide Ofsted (and ISI), on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specific period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.

### **“What happens about confidentiality?”**

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Head and those directly involved. The Chairman of Governors may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police. You would be fully informed. Inspectors may also request access to correspondence statements and records of complaints under paragraph 7(K) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints may not be pursued.

Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

### **“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”**

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

### **3. Governors’ Panel**

If the matter remains unresolved the Headmaster will refer the matter to the Chairman of Governors who will appoint a panel to hear your complaint. The panel will consist of three persons (not previously directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint), one of whom is independent of the school. The panel will be convened within 14 working days of parents indicating that they are not satisfied with the Head’s response.

Parents may be accompanied by one other person to the panel hearing but legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The Panel will write to the parents, and where relevant, to the person being complained about, informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within five working days of the completion of the hearing. This time scale also ensures that all complaints will be dealt with within the EYFS time-frame of 28 days. Copies of such findings and recommendations will also be sent to the Head and be available on the School premises for inspection by the Chairman of Governors.

Tettenhall College recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.

You can contact OFSTED on 03001231231 or you can write to the Secretary of State (see address below) if you think you can show that the school has broken the law, or acted unreasonably. Unreasonableness in the strict legal sense means acting in a way in which no reasonable authority could act. You should include copies of any refusal letters you have received, a copy of the appeal panel’s decision, copies of any further correspondence with the school and any relevant supporting evidence.

**The Secretary of State  
Department of Education (DfE)  
School Admissions Team  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT**

**OFSTED  
Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
03001231231  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)**

**Independent Schools Inspectorate  
CAP House  
9 - 12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA**

**Telephone 020 7600 0100  
Fax 020 7776 8849  
[www.isi.net/contact/contact.htm](http://www.isi.net/contact/contact.htm)**

**Wolverhampton City Council  
Duty and Assessment Team  
Civic Centre  
St. Peter's Square  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 0HR**

**(01902) 555392/552999**