



IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL
WOOLVERSTONE HALL
SUFFOLK

Complaints Procedure Policy



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Complaints Procedures (for Parents' Use)

Ipswich High School aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly and in a spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to happen. Our Complaints Procedure is designed to help parents and pupils to resolve such concerns or misunderstandings at an early stage and thereby limit the confusion and upset which they often cause. We treat as a complaint any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy. The Complaints Procedure is laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and is a three-stage process:

1. Informal complaint
2. Formal complaint
3. Panel hearing

Whilst we would normally seek to resolve a complaint at the informal stage, parents may proceed straight to the formal process if they wish to.

Stage One: Informal Complaints

Any pupil or parent with an informal complaint is encouraged to discuss it informally with their Form Tutor/Head of Year or Class Teacher or to contact the Head of Prep, Head of Sixth Form, Assistant Head (Wellbeing) or Deputy Head. The matter will be discussed and every attempt will be made to find an informal resolution to the issue. Informal complaints may be made in person or via telephone, email or letter. The School endeavours to respond to the parent on weekdays during term time within 48 hours. This might be with an acknowledgement email in the first instance. Follow-up contact, will be made within ten working days. Any informal complaint sent to staff who are away on holiday will be responded to once term begins again. If a parent is not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint, the complaint may be escalated to the formal process.

Stage Two: Formal Complaints

Formal complaints should be made in writing to the Head. They will be investigated by an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), usually the Deputy Head or Head of Prep. The investigator will respond to the complainant by letter within five working days and attempt to complete the investigation within two working weeks. The investigator will record their findings in the Complaints Log along with all correspondence from and to the complainant. Complaints about the Head should be directed to the proprietor.



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Stage Three: Panel Hearing

In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their complaint made in stage two above and notifies the Head to that effect in writing, there is provision for an appeal hearing by three individuals, none of whom were directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Although arranging a panel hearing is in fact the role of the proprietor, the arrangement of such a hearing can be delegated by them to the Head. If the complaint is against the Head, the Head would not be involved in arranging the panel and the responsibility would remain with the proprietor.

It is intended that the panel hearing will normally be held within three working weeks of the Head receiving the request for an appeal. The membership of the appeals panel will be determined by the Head who may chair the panel and will include one person independent of the management and day to day running of the school.

Parents making an appeal may be accompanied by a friend (not a legal representative). If it is appropriate for a pupil to appear before the panel they may be accompanied by their parents or guardian, if they so choose. The appeal panel will consider the complaint and the grounds for the appeal and make appropriate findings and any necessary recommendations. These will be made available to the complainant and any others involved, as appropriate. Once initiated, panel hearings will take place even if the parent indicates they do not wish to proceed further and will be held even if the parent decides not to attend.

External Complaints Organisations

Parents and pupils are advised that they may also take their complaints to the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Current contact details are available from the ISI website <http://www.isi.net/parents-and-pupils/concerns-about-a-school>.

Alternatively, parents and pupils are advised that for matters in respect of the safeguarding of children they may contact Alison Hassey, Head of Safeguarding (Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board) at Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX Tel 01473 265359

Please note that the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on the school's website and can be found [here](#).

Effective and fair resolution of concerns usually requires that they are brought to the school's attention promptly, which should normally be within three months of the relevant event(s). Complaints may be heard after this time if the complaints panel or chief executive of Ipswich Education Ltd consider that the delay has not prejudiced an effective and fair resolution.



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Record Keeping

The Deputy Head keeps a full record of all informal and formal complaints and any appeals. This record states whether complaints are resolved by formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing as well as the action taken by the School as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether it is upheld). This file is reviewed termly to monitor any pattern in the complaints.

All paperwork in respect of complaints is confidential, except where access is required by an appropriate body, for example one conducting an inspection of the School's complaints procedure. During the 2017 – 2018 academic year, one formal complaint was received.

Note to Staff

Staff who deal with complaints should always keep the appropriate member of SMT informed of the issues and the proposed solution. They should also pass a copy of the correspondence or their notes to the Deputy Head or Head of Juniors, for the consolidated record of complaints. Staff who have any questions about a complaint or the way forward should speak with the Deputy Head or Head of Juniors at the earliest opportunity.

Key Contacts:

Head	Oona Carlin	head@ipswichhighschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Paul Newton	paul.newton@londonandoxford.com

Last Updated: August 2018 by the Deputy Head

Next Review: August 2019