

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



## Introduction

*Truro School and Truro School Prep welcome suggestions and comments from parents and will always take seriously any complaint that might be raised. The School is here for your sons and daughters and we want to hear your points of view. 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 complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's class teacher or the teacher concerned in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher cannot resolve the matter to the parents' satisfaction, they should then refer the matter to the Head.

Complaints made directly to the Head will usually be referred to the relevant class teacher unless the Head deems it appropriate for him to deal with the matter personally.

The class 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 five working days or in the event that the class teacher and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then they will be advised to proceed with their 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 parent(s) should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Head will speak or write to the parent(s) concerned, normally within 5 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 to carry out further investigations.

The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parent(s) will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.

If the parent(s) are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If the parent(s) seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Convenor<sup>1</sup>, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors, who, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 2 working days.

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 4 working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

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<sup>1</sup> The Convenor is an independent person appointed to this role. Details of their identity may be obtained by contacting the Clerk to the Governors (c/o the School) who will forward all requests for a Panel Hearing direct to the Convenor. Alternatively, please write to the Convenor, c/o The Clerk to the Governors, who will forward the correspondence to the Convenor.

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