

Pupil Complaints Policy



TRENT
COLLEGE

Introduction

We want all our pupils to feel safe, valued and happy at school. Any complaint made by a pupil is taken seriously and followed up so a satisfactory resolution is found. The school encourages all pupils to have the confidence to express themselves at all times. If something is causing concern we want pupils to tell us what it is so we can help. Pupils views can be passed through a wide variety of channels including tutorial discussions, meetings with House staff, teaching staff or any member of our community; alternatively they can be e-mailed to a relevant member of staff or passed on via a note. Pupils can be assured that the complaint and follow up investigation will be handled sensitively and there will be no negative repercussions for any pupil. Each complaint will be written up on and passed through the appropriate channels.

The Senior Management Team in the school will monitor complaints & ensure that any trend is quickly identified and managed in the best interests of our pupils.

The stages below will be followed on all complaints except in relation to Child Protection allegations where a separate policy and procedure applies.

Stage 1:

- If a pupil has a complaint, they should normally communicate this through their Tutor. If not the Tutor then it should be passed to another member of staff (e.g. Housemaster/mistress, Head of Year, Head of Tier or a teacher). The relevant member of staff will note the complaint and start a follow up process into the cause of the complaint. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means, to the pupil's satisfaction.
- If the Tutor, or Head of Year or Housemaster/mistress, cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to refer it to the Head of Tier or a Deputy Head. If the pupil's complaint is against their Tutor, then in the first instance, they should speak direct to their Housemaster/mistress, Head of Year, Head of Tier, Deputy Head or the Head. The member of staff investigating the complaint will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- At the end of Stage 1 (which will be completed within 7 days of receiving the complaint) the pupil will be informed of the result of the investigation and the resolution to the complaint.

Stage 2:

- If the pupil or parent is unhappy with the resolution reached in Stage 1, then the pupil 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, or her representative, will meet the pupil (and possibly parents) concerned, normally within 7 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 instigate further investigation.
- The Head, or her representative, 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 the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the pupil (and normally parents) will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for her decision.
- If the pupil and/or their parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.
- Details of complaints received are held centrally.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If the pupil or their parent(s)/guardian seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaint 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 will be a person independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governors. The Clerk, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 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 two days before the hearing.
- The pupil may be accompanied to the hearing by another person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint 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 the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations as soon as possible after the Hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel will write to all participants informing them of the decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations, will also be sent in writing to the Board of Governors and, where appropriate, the person about whom the complaint has been made.

Pupils can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential and subject to the Data Protection Act. The exception to this confidentiality is where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 163 of the 2002 Act requests access to these records.

Ofsted is the schools/childcare providers' inspectorate in England; their role is to inspect schools/childcare providers and report on the findings. Outside of these inspections Ofsted do not normally get involved in issues such as complaints as it would fall outside of their remit. Serious welfare concerns, however, may be investigated.