



Complaints Procedure

This policy is available on request and is published on the school's website.

I. Introduction

- (i) This Policy applies to the whole of The Rowans School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. Rowans, as part of The Shrewsbury House Schools Trust, ("the school") is committed to providing a high level of teaching and pastoral care for 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.
- (ii) The Rowans School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. As required by legislation, the School provides current parents with a procedure in the event of a complaint. Thus, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. All complaints will be treated seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five working days if received in the term time and as soon as is practicable during holiday periods. This Procedure includes complaints arising in the EYFS and children participating in after school activities. Parents of children in EYFS and those participating in after school activities have a right to lodge a complaint with ISI and Ofsted. The record of formal complaints is retained by the Head.

2. Stage I – Informal Resolution

- (i) It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- (ii) If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Class Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Senior Leadership Team or the Head.
- (iii) Complaints made directly to the Senior Leadership Team or the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher unless the Senior Leadership Team or the Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- (iv) The Class Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the dates on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within a week or in the event that the Class Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to request an appointment with the Head. Should this not provide a satisfactory resolution, parents should proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.
- (v) If the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors

3. 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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- (ii) In most cases, the Head will meet or telephone the parents concerned, normally within 7 school days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached
- (iii) It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- (iv) The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- (v) If the complaint is against the Head, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the head and for all the relevant documents. The Chair of Governors may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases discuss the matter further with the parents. Once the Chair of Governors is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, he/she will offer to meet the parents or parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair of Governors will give reasons for his/her decision.
- (vi) Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, he/she will offer to meet the parents or a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for the decision.
- (vii) If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, within 7 days of the Head's proposed resolution, they should request to proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure
- (viii) A record is maintained for 3 years of any concerns which are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; including any action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

4. 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 Chair, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- (ii) The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and day to day running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of Governors. The Head, 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 school 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 normally be supplied to all parties not later than 7 school days prior to the hearing.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately, without the need for further investigation.
- (vi) 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 normally complete within 7 school 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.
- (vii) The findings and recommendations of any panel hearing are available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Head.
- (viii) 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 Section 109 of the 2008 Act; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

5. Record Keeping, Document Retention and Data Protection

- (i) A written record is kept of all formal complaints made and whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing, as well as any action taken by the school as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld.
- (ii) The Rowans School ensures that all records relating to formal complaints are securely stored.
- (iii) Please do refer to the Parent and Pupil Privacy Notices on the School Website: <http://www.rowans.org.uk/policies/policies>
- (iv) Records of such complaints would routinely be kept for a minimum of 7 years after the pupil they relate to has left the School.
- (v) Subject to the circumstances around the concern or complaint, it is possible for the records to be retained for longer, e.g. for 25 years from the date of birth of the pupil involved.
- (vi) If there are any safeguarding considerations in relation to the concern or complaint, it is possible that these records will be retained for longer in line with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.