



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Complaints Policy

ISI Code:	33a Complaints Policy
Policy Author:	Shaun Fenton, Headmaster
Date Reviewed By Author:	June 2019
Next Review Due:	June 2021
Date Approved By Governing Body:	24 June 2019
Next Review by Governing Body Due:	June 2021

Introduction

This document is for parents of pupils and is on the school website and on request.

We hope that your child's career at Reigate Grammar School will proceed without major problems. However, if you have a concern, please follow this procedure and you may expect your concern to be treated with care, respect and in accordance with the procedures below.

Please do tell us of your concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

We aim to address all concerns within the time-frames set out at each stage. However, where there are exceptional circumstances resulting in delay, the parents will be notified of this and informed of any revised timescales as soon as possible.

Child Protection: Concerns regarding Child Protection are outside the scope of this procedure. If you have a concern regarding Child Protection, please contact one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads: Sarah Arthur, Mary-Ann Collins, or Nick Lobb, directly by telephoning the School Office (01737 222231).

Appeals against exclusion: These are heard under a different procedure, details of which are available from the Headmaster's Office.

Stage 1 (Informal)

1. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns can be resolved quickly and informally. Often there is a misunderstanding which can be easily resolved.
2. The person best placed to deal with any concern and complaint will usually be your child's Form Tutor; however, you may wish to contact the relevant Head of Year, or (if the problem concerns an academic matter) the Head of the relevant department. Staff email addresses may be found on the school website and in the termly calendar. If you are not sure who to contact, please contact the School Office (info@reigategrammar.org).

If you wish to discuss the problem face to face, the Form Tutor, Head of Year/Section or Head of Department will usually be able to see you one day before or after school. Please contact them by email in advance to make an appointment.

We aim to acknowledge receipt of a complaint or concern received by telephone, email or letter within 3 working days during term time and as soon as practicable during the school holidays and no later than 3 working days from the beginning of the next term.

3. If necessary, the Form Tutor will speak to any other relevant staff (such as another teacher, Head of Department or Head of Year/Section) in order to investigate your concern.
4. We will always try to resolve any complaints within 10 working days of them being raised, except where they are raised in school holidays, in which case we will try to resolve them within 10 working days of the start of the new school term. If the matter is not resolved, or if you have a serious complaint which you feel cannot be dealt with by the Form Tutor, Head of Section or Head of Department, you should then proceed to Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 (Formal)

5. If the complaint or concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis at Stage 1 above, you can make a formal complaint, in writing, to the Headmaster, making reference to the Complaints Policy. The Headmaster will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days, or if your complaint is during a school holiday, the Headmaster will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days of the new school term.
6. The Headmaster, or one of the Deputy Heads, will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases either the Headmaster, or one of the Deputy Heads will meet or speak with the parents concerned, normally within 5 working days of receiving the complaint

(during term time), to discuss the matter and if the complaint cannot be resolved at this stage, to detail the next steps. If an investigation is needed, the Headmaster may delegate responsibility for undertaking investigation of the complaint to one of the Deputy Heads as appropriate. He (or one of the Deputy Heads) may ask to meet the parents for a discussion of the problem. The designated Deputy Head will then conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. A written record will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

7. Following the investigation, the Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. You will be informed of this decision in writing, although some details may need to be withheld if they relate to individuals such as a staff member or child in the community. The Headmaster, or one of the Deputy Heads may also ask to meet with you to explain the decision. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible; the school's target is to give its decision within 15 working days of the complaint being received if the complaint is lodged during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods and certainly no later than 15 working days from the start of the next term.
8. If your complaint is about an action of the Headmaster personally, then you may refer it to the Chairman of Governors, Mr James Dean. You may contact him by writing to him c/o Reigate Grammar School, Reigate Road, Reigate, RH2 0QS or by email to chairman@reigategrammar.org stating clearly that you are making a complaint and making reference to the Complaints Policy

Stage 3 (Appeal)

9. If the matter is still not resolved, parents may wish to proceed to Stage 3, and ask for their complaint to be referred to a Complaints Panel. The appeal must be made in writing, stating that you are making a request for a Panel Hearing and this appeal must be lodged within 10 working days of the Headmaster's decision at Stage 2.
10. Your appeal should be addressed to the Chairman of Governors, James Dean and sent to him c/o Reigate Grammar School, Reigate Road, Reigate, RH2 0QS or by email to chairman@reigategrammar.org. Your request for an appeal will be acknowledged within 3 working days of the Chairman receiving it, or as soon as practicable during school holidays and certainly no later than 3 working days from the start of the next term
11. You should provide a list of your complaint(s) made against the school and which you believe not to have been resolved satisfactorily by the Stage 2 Procedure, along with the remedies sought in respect of each. You should also state whether you wish to attend the hearing, or whether the panel may deal with the matter based only on written submissions.
12. The Chairman of Governors will then convene a panel consisting of three individuals, two governors and one independent member, *who must be independent of the management and running of the school, and who must have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment.*
13. The Chairman of Governors will inform the Headmaster that an appeal has been lodged. A secretary to the Appeal Panel will be appointed and they will gather together all the relevant paperwork and make the arrangements for the appeal hearing. The panel will convene as soon as possible, normally within 15 working days of the receipt of your appeal.
14. If you have requested to attend the hearing, you will be invited to attend and speak to the panel; you may be accompanied at the appeal hearing if you wish. The Headmaster will usually also attend the hearing, and may bring a colleague (for example, the Deputy Head who has investigated the matter under Stage 2 above). Details of anyone accompanying either party should be provided in advance to the Secretary. If the parents decide not to attend the hearing, the panel will still hear the appeal.
15. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the panel will reach a decision, and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working days of the hearing. The decision reached by the Complaints Panel is final. The panel's findings will be sent in writing or email to the parents, the Headmaster, the Chairman of Governors and, where relevant, the person complained about. The letter will state any reasons for the decision reached and recommendations (if any) made by

the Complaints Panel. The communication of the final decision should reach parents within 15 working days of the panel hearing.

A written record of all formal complaints and their outcome, *including the action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld)*, will be kept by the Headmaster, including whether they have been resolved at Stage 2 or proceeded to a panel hearing. Such records will be kept for one year after the pupil leaves the school.

The panel findings and recommendations are made available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher.

Confidentiality: Parents may be assured that all complaints and expressions of concern, whether raised informally or formally, will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection requests access to them, or where any other legal obligation prevails – this is in accordance with Section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act.

There were no Stage 2 or Stage 3 complaints in the 2017/2018 academic year.