



REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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## Complaints Policy

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<b>ISI Code:</b>	33a Complaints Policy
<b>Policy Author:</b>	Shaun Fenton, Headmaster
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	June 2023
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## 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 issues. 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 timeframes 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, Brendan Stones, Nick Lobb, Phil Jackson, Elizabeth Taylor and Vicky Papadopoulou 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 Head'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 issue 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 (RGSschooloffice@reigategrammar.org).

If you wish to discuss the matter 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 Head, referring to the Complaints Policy. The Head will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days, or if your complaint is during a school holiday, the Head will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days of the new school term.
6. The Head, or one of the Deputy Heads, will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases either the Head, or one of the Deputy Heads will meet or speak with the parents concerned, normally within five 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 Head may delegate responsibility for undertaking investigation of the complaint to one of the Deputy Heads. He (or one of the Deputy Heads) may ask to meet the parents to discuss the issue. 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 Head 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 Head, 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 Head personally, then you may refer it to the Chair of Governors, Mr Mark Elsey. You may contact him by writing to him c/o Reigate Grammar School, Reigate Road, Reigate, RH2 0QS or by email to [chair@reigategrammar.org](mailto:chair@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 ten working days of the Head's decision at Stage 2.
10. Your appeal should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, Mr Mark Elsey, and sent to him c/o Reigate Grammar School, Reigate Road, Reigate, RH2 0QS or by email to [chair@reigategrammar.org](mailto:chair@reigategrammar.org). Your request for an appeal will be acknowledged within three working days of the Chair receiving it, or as soon as practicable during school holidays and certainly no later than three 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 Chair 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 Chair of Governors will inform the Head 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 Head 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 Head, the Chair 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 Head, 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's 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 2021-2022 academic year.**