

FINBOROUGH SCHOOL
COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE - PARENTS

The school will treat any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school as a complaint. This policy and procedure is made available to all prospective or current parents via the public area of our website (www.finboroughschool.co.uk) or in hard copy via the school office.

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS.

Finborough School will:

- Respond to complaints within a reasonable time –no longer than five working days after the receipt of a complaint but normally within forty-eight hours - and in a courteous and efficient way.
- Listen and take complaints seriously.
- Take action where appropriate.
- Should a parent be dissatisfied with the response to a complaint the school will provide for a hearing before a panel of at least three people, who were not directly involved in previous consideration of a complaint.

How to make a complaint

- You may write, telephone, fax, e-mail or speak in person to the staff at reception.
- Normally a senior member of staff will respond to your complaint or concern.
- If you have a concern that relates to the boarding houses, medical matters or to the Games Department it may be best to contact the staff responsible for those areas directly.

How your complaint will be handled

Stage 1 - Initial or informal stage – no more than 14 working days

- It may be possible to resolve the particular issue immediately and to your satisfaction via telephone contact, meetings, e-mail or letter.
- How rapidly we respond to a complaint will depend on the nature of the complaint, the mode of communication and the extent of any necessary investigation. If the complaint relates to the health and safety of a child we will respond within 24 hours. All complaints will be acknowledged within 48 hours and a response made by telephone, email or letter within five working days.
- If you make a complaint in writing we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.
- In many circumstances the nature of the complaint may require several staff to be consulted before a full response is made.
- Meetings may be arranged at the request of the parent or the school in order to discuss the issues raised in the complaint more fully before a final response is made.
- If a resolution to the complaint is agreed at this initial stage –within 14 working days of receipt of a complaint – then a written summary of key points and agreed action will be produced and sent to parents. All correspondence, notes on meetings and telephone calls will be kept securely on file. Only those staff directly involved in the matter will be informed of the outcome.

Stage 2 - If there is no initial agreement

- If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, then parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head of School, in which case it is recorded on the Complaints Register. The Head will decide the appropriate course of action.
- In most cases the Head will make arrangements to meet parents within five working days of receiving the written complaint. 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 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 parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will give reasons for the decision.
- If parents are not satisfied with the Head's decision they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure

Stage 3 - If there is still no agreement

- If parents are not satisfied with the proposed action then they will be offered the option of referring the matter to the Principal or a complaints panel made up of at least three persons. At least one of the persons on this panel will be independent of the school and will be suited to the task of assessing evidence and making judgments. No person on the panel will have been directly involved in any previous consideration of the complaint. The Principal will be responsible for organising the panel, and arranging meeting times and locations.
- Parents may attend panel meetings and may be accompanied by others.
- The complaints panel will meet within 14 working days of a request being made.
- The complaints panel will produce a written report of their findings and recommendations with copies supplied to parents, the school and any particular individuals materially involved in the complaint. This will be done within 28 days of receiving the written complaint.
- The panels report / findings will be made available for inspection by the Proprietor and Headteacher.
- The parents of boarding pupils or any parent living abroad who are unable to attend panel meetings in person may appoint a representative of their choice to attend.

Parents of Boarding Pupils

- All elements of the complaints process above are open to the parents of boarding pupils. Parents who are unable to attend a panel meeting in person may send a representative of their choice and represent their views by email, fax, letter or telephone.
- If parents of boarding students are not satisfied with the way their complaint is being dealt with they can make a direct complaint to Ofsted at www.ofsted.gov.uk or on 0845 6404040. Alternatively complaints, may be made to Suffolk Children's Safeguarding Board at ali.spalding@suffolk.gov.uk or on 01473 26417.

Record keeping and confidentiality relating to all complaints

- Your complaint and all written documents associated with it will be treated and kept as confidential and only those staff who have to be involved in investigating or resolving the issues will be informed. Any complaint made by a parent will not rebound adversely on their child or children. We cannot entirely rule out the need to make a

third party outside the school aware of your complaint. This would only happen in cases where, for example, a child's safety was at risk.

- Action taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of a parental complaint will be handled confidentially within the school.
- Access to correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be provided where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.
- A copy of all written documentation associated with any complaint will be kept on file for at least 5 (10 if contemptuous) 3 years.
- The school will record the stage at which a complaint was resolved and the action taken as a result.

Complaints to External Bodies

Parents can make a complaint directly to Ofsted at any stage of the process via www.ofsted.gov.uk or on 0845 6404040.

Parents can also complain to the Independent Schools Inspectorate via www.isi.net/complaintschool by writing to **ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA**, or to concerns@isi.net.

Parents can also contact the Department for Education via www.gov.uk/complain-about-school or on **0370 000 2288**.

In the academic year 2015/2016 there were 3 complaints registered under the formal procedure.

Reason for Review/Amendments	Annual review August 2016
Details of changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed to ensure current legislation and practices are included. • Policy updated with changes to staffing and responsibilities.
Date of next review	Annual review August 2017

Name	Position	Responsible for	Signature	Date
J Sinclair	Principal	Governance/ oversight		
L Sinclair	HR Director	Recruitment/ Staff policies		
S Clark	Headteacher	Document Control and Implementation (academic staff)		
H Svendsen-Cook	Headteacher's PA / Admissions	Document Administration (non-academic staff)		