



WESTMINSTER UNDER SCHOOL

POLICY ON COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Westminster Under School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care that it provides for its pupils. However, if pupils or parents do have a complaint, they can expect to be assisted by the School in accordance with the procedure detailed below. The aim of the procedure is to produce a resolution that everyone involved can accept.

For Pupils:

If a pupil has a concern, he should speak to his form teacher or any other teacher. If the concern is not resolved then a pupil should ask his parents to follow the procedure below.

For Parents:

Stage One - Informal Resolution

It is hoped that all complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a concern or a complaint they should normally first contact their son's Form Teacher. It is anticipated that Form Teachers themselves will be able to resolve the majority of concerns to the parents' satisfaction, although it might be necessary to consult the subject teacher if the question is an academic one. Similarly, Form Teachers might need to refer to the Deputy Head or the Master if the concern is about a disciplinary matter. In some instances, it might be appropriate for parents to raise their concern directly with the Master.

The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within a reasonable period of time (normally 14 days), or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory solution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with the procedure below.

Stage Two - Formal Resolution

If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then parents should put their concern in writing to the Master. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged, and the Master will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Master will meet with the parents, normally within 14 days of receiving the complaint if it is in term time, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. The School aims to resolve all complaints within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

It might be necessary to carry out further investigation, for example where there are other parties involved.

Once the Master is satisfied that all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Master will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied, they should proceed as below.

Stage Three - Panel Hearing

This stage of the Complaints Procedure will only be necessary should the matter not be resolved at the former two stages.

If this stage has been reached, parents should write to:

The Secretary to the Governing Body of Westminster School
17 Dean's Yard
London SW1P 3PB

A Panel, which consists of two Governors not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one person independent of the management of the School, will be convened to hear the concern.

The Secretary to the Governing Body will acknowledge the receipt of the letter of concern and will schedule a meeting to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 28 days.

Parents may be accompanied to this meeting by their son and one other person. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. Parents are asked to notify the Secretary to the Governing Body, in advance of the hearing, of the details of the person accompanying them.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' concern immediately 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 relevant facts, the Panel will form a decision within 7 days of the ending 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 recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, Chairman of the Governors, Master and, where relevant, the person against whom the complaint has been made.

The Master will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. These written records will also show at what point the formal complaint was resolved whether by the Master or by a panel hearing and what action was taken as a result of the complaint.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Furthermore, all decisions will be made impartially and within a reasonable time. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under Section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

During the academic year 2018/19 there were no formal complaints made.