



PARENTAL COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all sections of the school and is available to all parents and prospective parents upon admission and from the Main Office on request.

The Roman Ridge School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated sensitively in accordance with the outlined procedure.

We practice an 'open door' policy between parent and school, to encourage frequent communication around the progress of pupils and to enable us to clarify an issue or swiftly address any concerns parents may have.

We ask our staff to be aware of:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints;
- The importance of treating complaints respectfully and with sensitivity;
- Our preference for complaints to be resolved at an early and informal stage.

If a complaint is not resolved at informal level (Stage 1), it then proceeds to formal resolution as set out below (in Stages 2 and 3)

PROCEDURES:

STAGE 1 - Informal Resolution

We hope that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

- Teachers should be a parent's first point of contact. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have informally with the relevant Class/Subject Teachers or Form Tutors in the first instance. The Teacher will aim to resolve any problems to parents' satisfaction as swiftly as possible and normally within 48 hours.
- If a Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone within this time frame, it may be necessary for him / her to consult their Sectional Head who will contact parents about the complaint normally within 48 hours of it being referred to them with the aim of finding a resolution.
- A complaint may be reported directly to the Sectional Head who will contact parents about the complaint within 48 hours of the complaint being made with the aim of finding a resolution.
- The Principal must be kept informed of all informal and formal complaints brought to the attention of Sectional Heads. A dated, written record of all informal complaints received in each section is to be kept by each Sectional Head. This record should outline action taken to resolve the complaint and will note at which stage the complaint was resolved. This record will be regularly examined by the Principal.
- Should the matter not be resolved within the above time frame or in the event that parents feel that an informal resolution is not possible, they will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

STAGE 2 - Formal Resolution

If parents feel the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then they are advised to formally present their complaint in person or in writing to the Sectional Head.

- In most cases, the Sectional Head will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Sectional Head to carry out further investigations.
- Sectional Heads must notify the Principal of any formal complaint received and keep a dated, written record outlining the details of the complaint, including action taken to resolve the matter

and at which stage the complaint was resolved, which will be regularly examined by the Principal. The Principal must be kept informed as the Sectional Head works to resolve the issue and must be copied on all relevant documentation.

- Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Sectional Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing as soon as possible and normally within 3 working days of having received the complaint.

If parents are not satisfied with a Sectional Head's decision with regards to an informal or formal complaint, they are advised to present their complaint to the Principal, which will be considered a formal complaint.

- In most cases, the Principal will speak to the parents concerned, normally within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations.
- Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaints and will note at which stage the complaint was resolved.
- Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing as soon as possible and normally within 3 working days of having received the complaint.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision of the Principal, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

STAGE 3 - Formal Appeal to Academic Board of Governors

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of the Academic Board of Governors.

- The matter will then be referred to the Academic Board for consideration
- The Chair, on behalf of the Academic Board, will acknowledge the complaint and will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days.
- If the Academic Board deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing.
- If possible, the Academic Board will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- The PTA Chair, holds a permanent seat on the Academic Board, must have met with the parent bringing forth the complaint prior to the hearing. This is to ensure the parent's views are represented by someone independent of Management during the hearing.
- Where further investigation is required, the Academic Board will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Academic Board will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 5 working days of the Hearing.
- The Chair, on behalf of the Academic Board will write to the parents informing them of its decision and reasons for it. The decision of the Academic Board will be final. The Academic Board's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained of. These findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chair of Academic Board of Governors and the Principal.

A dated, written record of all formal complaints or appeals to the Academic Board of Governors are received by the School will be kept by the Principal.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential.