

COMPLAINTS POLICY



HARROW
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
哈罗国际学校
SHANGHAI 上海

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| Effective Date | March 2019 |
| SLT Approval | March 2019 |
| Reviewed | October 2021 |
| Next Review Date | October 2022 |

POLICY FOR COMPLAINTS BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

This is a whole School policy, including EYFS.

Although the School is determined to provide a good high-quality service for pupils and their parents, there may be occasions where there is a cause for concern. In these circumstances, every effort will be made to resolve any difficulty as quickly as possible. However, it is far more likely that any difficulty will be resolved quickly and effectively if the structure of the complaints policy is followed. This policy applies to all phases of Harrow School Shanghai, including EYFS, and is available to all parents, staff and pupils. *During the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, please understand that the resolution timelines listed within the policy may be delayed due to the restrictions faced by the School.*

Stage 1: Informal Resolution (a satisfactory outcome should be reached, where possible, within **three working days**)

If a parent, parents or a child's legal guardian has a complaint, they should contact their son's/daughter's class teacher, tutor or Housemaster/mistress. This individual can assess whether the matter is an academic one, to be passed to the Head of Department or the Director of Studies, or a pastoral one with which they can deal, maybe in consultation with the relevant Head of Phase or Deputy Head. In most cases, we hope this would resolve the matter to the parent's satisfaction rapidly.

If the complaint is about the individual to whom complaints should first be directed, contact should then be made to that individual's 'line manager' (for example if the complaint was about the class teacher, the relevant Head of Phase should be contacted. If the complaint is specifically concerned with the conduct of the Head Master, then the complaint should be made directly to the Chair of Governors, via the School's Head of Operations (Ms. Linda Sun). A written record may be kept.

Should the matter not be resolved within a reasonable timescale, or in the event that the School and the parent(s)/guardian fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents may wish to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Policy.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution (a satisfactory outcome should be reached, where possible, within **twelve working days**)

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parent should put their complaint in writing to the Head Master. He will then decide, after considering the complaint and consulting with staff, the appropriate course of action to take.

The Head Master, or a delegated representative, will meet the parent concerned to discuss the matter. A translator, if required, will be made available. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Head Master to carry out further investigation. The Head Master, or representative, will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, which will also be made available for the complainant. Once the Head Master is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parent(s)/guardian will be informed of this decision in writing, and reasons for the decision given.

If the parent(s)/guardian is still not satisfied with the decision, they may proceed to Stage 3 of this Policy.

Where the complaint is directed specifically at the Head Master or the outcome within Stage 2 is not deemed acceptable by the complainant, the procedure will, by necessity, move to Stage 3.

If the matter is resolved at Stage 2, then a written record will be kept, the date on which the matter was resolved alongside the conclusion and any actions to be taken by the School. These will be recorded on the School's Central Complaints Register.

Stage 3: Panel Hearing (this should be organised, where possible, **within fourteen working days**)

If the parent(s)/guardian seeks to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Head of Operations who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, with at least one member of the Panel unconnected with the day to day running of the School. This member would usually be a member of

the Board of Governors. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governors. The Head of Operations, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than two days before the hearing.

The parent(s)/guardian may be accompanied to the hearing for the matter of support by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend, and a translator will be provided if necessary.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent(s)/guardian's complaint without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out and the timeframe. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations as soon as possible after the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel will write to all participants, including the complainant/s, informing them of the findings, any recommendations and the decision. These may also be sent in writing to the Board of Governors and, where appropriate, the person about whom the complaint has been made. A record of this will be kept by the Head Master and it will be available for inspection by the Chair of Governors and the matter will be listed within the Central Complaints Register.

The Senior Leadership Team in the School will monitor complaints and ensure that any trend is quickly identified and managed in the best interests of our pupils.

All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential and subject to data protection regulations. The exception to this confidentiality is when governmental regulatory authorities insist on details of a case being made available to them. The confidential Central Complaints Register is held by the Head Master. It outlines the nature and dates of all complaints received that proceed to Stage 2 or beyond. In respect of each complaint received, and in line with policy, the Register also includes specific information as to:

- a. whether the complaint was resolved following an informal or formal procedure,



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- and whether matters proceeded to a panel hearing; and
- b. the action that was taken by the School as a result of each complaint (regardless of whether it was upheld or not).

Annual Update

The number of formal complaints (Stage 2 and 3) received by the School during the academic year 2020/21 was: 0

| Person Responsible for Updates | Date Last Reviewed | Next Review Due |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Deputy Head | October 2021 | October 2022 |