

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

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HARROW  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL  
哈罗国际学校  
SHANGHAI 上海

Effective Date	March 2019
SLT Approval	March 2019
Reviewed	October 2023
Next Review Date	October 2024

## 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 the whole of Harrow School Shanghai, including EYFS, and is available to all parents, staff and pupils.

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. 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 Principal Deputy Head. In most cases, we hope this would resolve the matter to the parent's satisfaction.

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 appointed Clerk to the Governors (the Head of Operations). A written record may be kept.

However, 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 Procedure.

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 procedure.

Where the complaint is directed specifically at the Head Master or the delegated representative, the procedure will, by necessity, move to Stage 3. A written record will be kept, the date on which it was completed and the conclusion. These will be recorded on the Central Complaints Register.

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 Clerk to the Governors 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, and with at least one member of the Panel who is unconnected and independent of the School (for example a Head from a neighbouring school). Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governors. The Clerk, 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 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. 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 complainants, informing them of the findings, any recommendations and the decision within seven days of the hearing. 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.

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. A confidential Complaints Log is held by the Head Master which outlines the nature and dates of all complaints received. In respect of each complaint received, and in line with policy, the Log also includes specific information as to:

- a. whether the complaint was resolved following an informal or formal procedure, 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 to 3) received by the school during the academic year 2022-23 was: 2

Person Responsible for Updates	Date Last Reviewed	Next Review Due
Principal Deputy Head	October 2023	October 2024