



## 1. INTRODUCTION

At Hadrian School our priority is to meet the needs and aspirations of pupils, parents and the wider school community whenever possible. With this in mind, we endeavour to offer high quality stimulating and relevant educational provision and resources for our pupils. Staff aim to act professionally and courteously in all situations and at all times. We are aware, however, that for a number of reasons communications may break down, and in these instances we will utilise comments and complaints in order to improve the quality of service provided by Hadrian School.

Hadrian School endeavours to handle all complaints as sensitively as possible and in such a way as to improve its services for Pupils, Parents / Carers and the wider School Community.

The following general principles, as recommended by Newcastle Local Authority, have been adopted by Hadrian School:

- the desirability for settling differences informally
- the need for more formal mechanisms for dealing fairly and effectively with complaints which have proved impossible to settle informally
- the assurance that Parents / Carers, Staff and Governors are fully informed of the procedures.

## 2. AIMS

In addition, the Hadrian School Complaints Policy aims to:

- promote an understanding of the School
- listen to our Pupils, Parents / Carers and the wider school community
- welcome complaints as a positive means of promoting pupil/parent satisfaction
- use complaints as a means of identifying opportunities to improve service
- seek to resolve complaints swiftly
- have clear and published procedures for dealing with complaints
- keep complainants informed about progress as well as the eventual outcome
- provide redress where a complainant is found to have substance
- monitor the pattern and frequency of complaints
- review regularly the effectiveness of complaints procedures.

## 3. GUIDELINES / PROCEDURES

Hadrian School Governing Body has adopted the model guidelines and procedures as agreed by Newcastle Local Authority. It is essential to remember that when faced with any complaint all parties should seek to deal with each stage WITHIN 15 DAYS of receiving notification of the complaint or of the continuing dissatisfaction of the complainant.

### 3.1 Complaints about Hadrian School

Complaints about Hadrian School issues should be raised, in the first instance with the Head Teacher.

#### **Who can complain?**

Anyone can complain, if they are affected by Hadrian School and its educational provision.

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**Policy: Complaints Policy**

**Date: February 2019**



**Hadrian School, Bertram Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6PY, Telephone 0191 2734440**

**Websites - School: [www.hadrian.newcastle.sch.uk](http://www.hadrian.newcastle.sch.uk) HEADS: [www.headstraining.co.uk](http://www.headstraining.co.uk)**

### **How can a complaint be made?**

Complaints may be made in person, by telephone or in writing.

#### 3.2 Informal Complaints

An informal complaint is an initial approach by an individual to Hadrian School expressing dissatisfaction with some aspect of the provision, service, its action or inaction. Informal complaints, however made, are complaints which are resolved quickly and simply, usually at the point of service delivery, and do not involve detailed or lengthy investigation.

A person with a complaint will normally seek to contact the member of staff responsible for the relevant issue. Should the complaint not be resolved the complainant will be referred to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. The Head or Deputy will generally make every effort to deal with the issue informally and on some occasions may feel the need to inform the Chairperson of the Governing Body. Should an initial informal discussion not resolve the situation, and the complainant indicates their continuing dissatisfaction, then the Head Teacher will convene an interview to review the issue in detail.

People who make informal complaints will be given information regarding follow up procedures. If they are dissatisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint, and wish to take the matter further, then a formal complaint can be lodged.

#### 3.3 Formal Complaints

A complaint becomes formal when the complainant remains dissatisfied after making an informal complaint, or alternatively, when, from the outset, a complaint cannot be dealt with simply and quickly and requires further investigation.

When a complaint becomes formal, care will be taken to:

- clarify the complaint
- clarify the person dealing with the complaint
- check whether the complainant needs support of any kind to explain the investigation procedure (e.g. English as an additional language)
- monitor the progress of the complaint by the Head Teacher or an appointed Governor
- make a full written response within 15 working days or where this is not possible, send a reply indicating progress to date and an estimate of time needed to make a full response
- give the complainant the name of the person dealing with the complaint
- advise the complainant how to proceed if they are still not satisfied.

A complaint of serious mal-administration should be progressed immediately as a formal complaint. The Chairperson of the Governing Body should be the first person to approach where the matter could involve disciplinary or legal action against the Head Teacher. Where a complaint involves an allegation of financial irregularity then the Head Teacher or Chairperson will advise the City Treasurer as appropriate. The papers relating to the complaint will be passed to the Chairperson of the Governing Body who will decide how the complaint is to be progressed.

The Chairperson of the Governing Body will ensure:

- the complaint is quickly referred to the relevant Committee (or to the Head Teacher)
- the complaint is reported to the whole Governing Body when resolved
- all parties to the complaint are given a fair hearing
- the decision of the Committee is given, in writing, to the complainant
- the complainant is told of any right of appeal if the decision is given against him or her.



### 3.4 External Reviews

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the matter has been considered by the Governing Body, then the complainant will be asked to contact the Head of the Administration Department at the Civic Centre. The Head of the Administration Department will carry out the review of the complaint and advise all parties of the findings.

### 3.5 Ombudsman

Where a complainant indicates they remain dissatisfied with the result of the review carried out by the Head of the Administration Department they will be advised that they may refer the matter to a Local Councillor and/or to the Commissioner for Local Administration in England (Local Government Ombudsman) and given the relevant details. This will normally be done by the Head of the Administration Department.

### 3.6 Remedy

Where a complaint is found to be justified a remedy should be provided. A remedy needs to be appropriate to the complaint and in virtually all cases will include an apology. In some cases the remedy will be the provision of a particular service requested by the complainant and in others it may require a change in school procedure. There may be circumstances where the complainant has sustained loss or suffering. In such cases, financial compensation proportionate to the loss may be considered, and in all such cases a report to the Governing Body will be required before payments are made.

### 3.7 Anonymous Complaints

Hadrian School will seek advice from the designated Directorate Complaints Officer in such cases.

### 3.8 Curriculum/Collective Worship – Special Procedures

Complaints about Hadrian School curriculum, collective worship or other related matters are dealt with by a special procedure in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988. Special procedures are also available for considering complaints about the way in which pupils' special educational needs are met. The Local Authority can provide copies of these procedures. (Also available – copies in languages other than English)

### 3.9 Annual Review

Annually, a brief report will be presented to the Governing Body which will detail:

- the number of complaints
- the subjects or issues in question
- the time taken to resolve complaints
- the assessment of complainant satisfaction
- changes brought about as a result of reviewing complaints.

This report will normally be presented for the previous year at the Summer Term Governors' Meeting. The Complaints Log Book is kept in the Admin Office.



**Confirmation that the Complaints Policy in respect of Hadrian School has been discussed by the Governing Body.**

Signed by:

Chair of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed at the Governing Body Meeting on: \_\_\_\_\_

Minute Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

