



HORRIS HILL
FOUNDED 1888

Complaints Policy & Procedure

Policy reviewed:	September 2018
Policy approval:	Reviewed by Policy Audit Committee October 2018 Approved by Full Governing Board November 2018
Date of next review:	September 2019

At Horris Hill we care about the welfare, happiness and education of each child in our care. We aim to work together with parents and other carers to ensure that Horris Hill provides the best possible education. Occasionally, things might not be up to these high expectations and complainants have the right to complain. This document is intended to make the process easy to understand and implement.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:

- Any complainant wishing to make a complaint knows how to do so.
- This policy is available on the school website.
- We respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient manner.
- All complainants realise that we listen and take complaints seriously.
- We take action where appropriate.

Exclusions are not covered by this Complaints Policy and Procedure. Please refer to the school's Good Behaviour and Sanctions Policy.

This policy is available for parents of pupils and prospective pupils but only applies to current pupils unless the complaint was raised when they were pupils at the school.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

The first thing to do is to express your concern directly with the appropriate person. It may well be that the Tutor is able to deal with most matters; anything to do with music, Director of Music; anything to do with sport, Director of Sport; matters academic, either with the subject teacher concerned, or with Director of Studies; disciplinary or boarding matters either with Housemaster concerned, Head of Boarding or with Deputy Headmaster. The Headmaster's wife is also available to deal with anything to do with boarding. The important thing is that they will listen and take appropriate action. Complaints are very rare and almost every concern is resolved at this stage. Should the matter not be resolved within **10 standard working days**, then complainants will be entitled to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

In the case that a complainant wishes to raise a complaint outside of normal school hours there is an emergency out of hours number listed on the school termly calendar. Hard copies of the calendar are

sent to all parents and the calendar is also accessible via the school's website. The time frames are as for in school hours.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the complainants should **put their complaint in writing** to the Headmaster, who will decide the necessary action. This may well involve a meeting with you, normally **within 10 standard working days** of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations. **Written records of all meetings and interviews, of the action taken by the school as a result of the complaint, whether it was upheld or not**, held in relation to the complaint will be kept by the Headmaster. Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and communicated to you in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision. If you are still not satisfied with the decision, complainants should proceed as follows:

Stage 3 – Complaints Panel Hearing

If complainants seek to proceed with Stage 3 following a failure to reach an earlier resolution they should request the Chairman of Governors to convene a hearing 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 details of the complaint. The Governors will appoint the Panel members, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. The Chairman, on behalf of the school, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable for the Panel to be convened. Normally, this will be **within 21 standard working days.**

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 material will be supplied to all parties **not later than 3 standard working days** prior to the hearing. **Complainants may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person.** Legal representation is not normally necessary.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the issue 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 relevant facts the Panel will reach a decision **within 21 standard working days** of the hearing.

The Panel will write to the complainant(s) informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The panel's findings with regard to the complaint and, if any, recommendations, will be sent in writing to the complainant(s), Headmaster, Governors and where relevant, the person of whom the complaint was initially raised.

The copies of the findings and recommendations should be available for inspection on the school premises by the Proprietor (Governing Body) and Headmaster.

Complainant Entitlements

A written record will be kept of all complaints that are made, and a) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or have proceeded to a panel hearing; b) of the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available upon request.