



LOCKERS PARK SCHOOL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Date Last Updated	By...	Date of next review
September 2019	GT	September 2020
September 2020	GT	September 2021
June 2021	Reviewed by Paul Spillane	September 2021
September 2021	GT	September 2022
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September 2024	GT	September 2025
September 2025	GT	September 2026
September 2026	GT	September 2027

LOCKERS PARK SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

With the introduction of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2003 (which came into force on 1st September 2003), independent schools are required by law to adopt, make available and apply a complaints procedure in order to comply with the Standards against which ISI inspections will be carried out.

INTRODUCTION

Lockers Park School is committed to providing the highest standards of education and pastoral care. We value positive relationships with parents and recognise that concerns or complaints, when handled properly, provide an opportunity to improve our provision. We aim to resolve concerns promptly, fairly and proportionately, with the best interests of the child at the centre of our decision-making.

This Complaints Procedure is published on the School website and available on request from the School Office. It complies with the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended).

Nothing in this procedure prevents concerns relating to safeguarding, child protection, allegations against staff, low-level concerns or whistleblowing from being managed under the appropriate statutory procedures. Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, it will be handled in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026).

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child's form teacher. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Pastoral Leadership Team.
- Complaints made directly to the Pastoral Leadership Team, Deputy Head or Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- Should the matter not be resolved within two working days, or in the event that the Form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

If a concern is received during a school holiday or other period of closure, the School will acknowledge it as soon as reasonably practicable and parents will be informed if published timescales need to be extended.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to The Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, The Headmaster will acknowledge the complaint within two working days and arrange to meet with the parents concerned, normally within 5 working days 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, which may take up to 3 working days after which the Headmaster will respond within 5 working days.
- The Headmaster may delegate aspects of the investigation where appropriate but remains responsible for ensuring that the complaint is investigated fairly and that the complainant receives a written outcome.
- 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 parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.
- The school's Complaint Log is limited to those complaints made in writing under the formal part of the procedure. The log will record whether the complaint was resolved following a formal procedure or a panel hearing at Stage 3 procedure, and what action has been taken by the school as result of these complaints regardless of whether they are upheld.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents wish to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to a Governor, who has been appointed by the Chairman of 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, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Bursar, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 working days.
- Should a complaint be made against the governance of the school, all governors will be implicated in the complaint, and thus governors will not be eligible to be part of the Complaints Panel. In this instance the Complaints Panel will consist of at least three people who have had no prior involvement in the matters detailed in the complaint. One member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the School, as required by the Independent School Standards.

- 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 7 working days prior to the hearing.
- The panel hearing will proceed even if the parent subsequently decides not to attend, unless the parent indicates that they are now satisfied and do not wish to proceed further. The Panel may proceed in the absence of the complainant if satisfied that reasonable notice has been given and it is appropriate to do so.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 7 working days of the Hearing. Within 7 days the Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, The Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant the person complained of. The findings and recommendations will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and Headmaster.

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 except where disclosure is required:

- to fulfil a legal obligation;
- to safeguard the welfare of children;
- during an inspection;
- by the Secretary of State; or
- by any body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Complaint records will be processed and retained in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the School's Data Protection Policy.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to an individual complaint will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act and the regulations amended in 2014 requests access to them.

Regulations for Boarders

- (a) The complaints procedure is available not only to parents but also to all staff and boarders; hard copies are available in both teacher and kitchen staffrooms and the office. In addition to this the procedure can be found on both the intranet and website.

- (b) Boys can consult the “Problem” poster that is displayed around the school and in classrooms. This gives details of a range of people, both staff and outside agencies in the event of a problem or issue. If they wish to see a hard copy of the procedure, they may do so by this facility.
- (c) Boarders and their parents are informed by the school how they can contact ISI regarding any complaints concerning boarding welfare; this is done via the contact details at the bottom.
- (d) The School maintains a written record of all formal complaints received at Stage 2 and Stage 3, together with:
 - whether they were resolved following Stage 2 or proceeded to a Panel Hearing;
 - the action taken by the School as a result of the complaint;
 - whether the complaint was upheld, partially upheld or not upheld.

Complaint records are retained for a minimum of seven years following resolution of the complaint, or longer where safeguarding or legal requirements apply.

The School will make available, on request, the number of formal complaints registered under Stage 2 or Stage 3 during the preceding academic year, in accordance with the Independent School Standards.

- (e) Complaints are resolved either to the complainant’s satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils, without unreasonable delay; see introduction of Procedure.
- (f) Boarders are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith; see boarding policy, paragraph 19.

A written record of all complaints will be kept indicating whether they are resolved at stage 2 or proceed to a panel hearing. The records will be kept for 5 years after the date of the resolution of the complaint. There was 1 complaint in the last school year which was not resolved at stage 1 of the procedure.

Written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days.

Parents may contact Ofsted if they believe the School is not meeting the statutory EYFS requirements. Information regarding the School's wider regulatory compliance may also be raised with the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) where appropriate.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

Ofsted

CAP House

The National Business Centre

9 - 12 Long Lane
London EC1A 9HA
Tel: 020 7600 0100

Piccadilly Gate, Store St.,
Manchester, M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231

Serial, Persistent or Unreasonable Complaints

The School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially. Where a complainant behaves in a manner that is unreasonable, abusive, persistent or vexatious, the School reserves the right to manage communications appropriately while ensuring that legitimate complaints continue to be considered fairly.

Linked Policies

- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Boarding Handbook
- Data Protection Policy
- EYFS Policy