

COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy applies to families and carers of the whole Alleyn's community, including the Junior School (and those in the EYFS) and the Senior School.

It is available on the School website and on request from the School Office. The number of complaints registered under formal procedures during the preceding academic year is available from the Headmaster's Office (Senior School) upon request.

The School believes that constant feedback is an important aspect of improvement and raising standards. Pupils, parents and staff are encouraged to share their views, opinions and any complaints they may have. People who have complaints, whether pupils or adults, should feel that these can be voiced and will be considered seriously. Feedback will be actively sought from pupils (*eg.* through Junior School Council, the Sectional Councils of the Senior School and the Senior School Council) and parents (*eg.* by regular meetings of the Alleyn's Parents' Association and the Alleyn's Junior School Association) in order to minimise complaints and to maximise accountability.

A record of complaints is logged by the appropriate pastoral staff in the Junior and Senior Schools and the number of complaints is available on request from the Head's PA in both the Senior and Junior Schools, as appropriate.

If the complaint is about an exclusion, then parents should obtain a copy of the Rewards and Sanctions Policy (p. 7) where reference is made to stage 2 – formal or stage 3 – panel hearing complaints procedures. See Stage 3 - panel hearing point b) below.

Additional requirements apply for EYFS settings beyond those which apply in the Senior School. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

a) There are various principles behind this policy

- There is a difference between a concern and a complaint. A concern is likely to require discussion, perhaps involving a teacher, pupil and parent, and it is hoped that it can be resolved quickly by such a discussion and appropriate action. If this does not resolve the concern then it could become a complaint.
- A complaint is likely to arise when there are issues of physical or emotional well-being and security or when the School's stated aims or values are being ignored.
- A breach of the law will always constitute a complaint.
- At all stages of dealing with a complaint, pupils may always be accompanied by a parent or another adult.
- The Headmaster will be informed of all complaints and their outcome.
- A written record is kept of all formal complaints, and of whether they are resolved at Stage 2 (formal) or proceed to Stage 3 (panel hearing). This record includes actions taken as a result of the complaint regardless of if it is upheld.
- In accordance with the Regulatory Requirements for the Provision of Information (DfE Part 6, Paragraph 24.(3)(g)) the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be available on request. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept strictly confidential except where the Secretary of

State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them.

- For the purposes of this policy, “working day” refers to whole School days during term time. Time limits may be subject to reasonable variance during the holidays.
- The record of a complaint is kept for at least 3 years. Parents can make a **complaint to Ofsted and/or ISI should they so wish. The contact details are:**
Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD (general helpline: 0300 123 1231, textphone no: 0161 618 8524)
ISI: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA (telephone: 020 7600 0100).
- Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Outline of procedure to be followed

Stage 1 – informal

- (a) Please note that it is always possible for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. (If in any doubt over whom to contact then please speak to Mr Skinnard, Senior Deputy Head; or Mr Severino, Head of Alleyn’s Junior School.)
- (b) All informal complaints will normally be dealt with in the first instance by an appropriate member of the Senior Staff, as listed in the table below, who will keep the Headmaster informed.
- (c) It is expected that informal complaints will be acknowledged within 48 hours. A period of no longer than 20 working days should cover the period from the lodging of the informal complaint to its resolution.

Stage 2 – formal

- (a) If a complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution as dealt with at Stage 1 (informal) above, they may proceed to make a formal, written complaint.
- (b) The formal complaint should be made in writing to the Headmaster of the Senior School or Junior School as appropriate.
- (c) The Headmaster will record the complaint, acknowledge it in writing within 5 working days of receipt, and normally ask a Deputy Head to investigate.
- (d) The Deputy Head investigating the complaint will undertake any necessary further investigation or action, contact (and if appropriate meet with) the complainant and provide a written report to the Headmaster, normally within 10 working days of being asked to investigate.
- (e) The Headmaster will consider this report, and if necessary undertake additional investigation and/or contact the complainant for a further discussion. He will notify the complainant of his final decision within a further 10 working days. Therefore, a period of no longer than 25 working days should cover the period from the lodging of the formal complaint to its resolution.

Stage 3 – panel hearing

- a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint as dealt with at Stage 2 above, then they may write to the Clerk to the Governors (at the School address) requesting a panel review. When requesting such a review, the complainant should outline the particulars of their complaint and the reasons for their dissatisfaction with the School’s

- resolution of it, and indicate whether they would like the matter considered on the papers or at a hearing. The request for a review must be made as soon as possible, and in any event within 5 working days of the decision at Stage 2 of the complaint being notified to them, unless this falls in a school holiday in which case the response to a panel review is dictated by the reasonable time in which the matter can be handled during or following the holidays.
- b) The Clerk will notify the Chairman of Governors, who will appoint a Panel to consider the complaint as soon as reasonably practicable. (In the case of a complaint regarding a pupil's suspension or exclusion, the Headmaster shall have complete discretion as to whether to implement the suspension or exclusion of the pupil pending the panel's decision.)
 - c) Within 5 working days of notifying their complaint to the Clerk in accordance with paragraph (a) above, the complainant shall send the Clerk copies of all documentation on which they intend to rely at the hearing. The complainant shall further produce (within 5 working days of the Clerk's request) any such further information and/or documentation that the Clerk reasonably considers the panel may require in order to make an informed decision on the complaint. The Clerk shall give a copy of the complainant's documentation to the Headmaster.
 - d) At least 5 working days before the panel review, the Headmaster shall submit to the panel a written statement setting out his views in relation to the complaint, including where appropriate a statement from the person(s) complained about. The Clerk shall give a copy of the Headmaster's statement to the complainant.
 - e) The panel will always comprise at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, including one person who is independent of the management and running of the School. At the discretion of the panel chairman, the hearing (if one has been requested) may take place at a location outside the School.
 - f) The complainant may be accompanied at the hearing by one other person who is over the age of 18 and not a pupil at the School. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. It will not normally be appropriate for the complainant to be legally represented at the hearing, and legal representation requires the prior approval of the panel chairman. The Headmaster will also attend the hearing to speak as to his decision in respect of the complaint. Where appropriate, the person(s) complained about may also attend the hearing.
 - g) If possible, the panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide when and how this should be carried out.
 - h) Within 5 working days of the panel review, the Clerk will send the complainant and the Headmaster a copy of the panel's draft report.
 - i) If either the complainant or the Headmaster believe that the report is not factually accurate, they shall inform the Clerk in writing within 5 working days, giving details of the alleged inaccuracies.
 - j) The panel shall then finalise its report. A copy of the panel's report will be: (i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and the person(s) complained about; and (ii) available for inspection on School premises by the Governors and the Headmaster. This will normally be within 20 working days of the panel hearing
 - k) Subject to the rules set out in this document, the panel may regulate their proceedings as they see fit.

- l) The decision of the panel is final, and shall remain confidential to the Governing Board, the complainant and the School.

Complaints – whom to contact (Senior School)

NB: If in doubt please contact Mr Skinnard, Senior Deputy Head.

Area of responsibility	Member of staff to contact
Lower School (Years 7, 8) issues	Mr Turner (Assistant Head, Head of Lower School)
Middle School (Years 9, 10, 11) issues.	Mrs Joel (Assistant Head, Head of Middle School)
Upper School (Years 12, 13) issues	Dr Atkinson (Assistant Head, Head of Upper School [Sixth Form])
Pastoral matters and co-curricular activities in Years 9 -13	The appropriate Housemaster: Brading's: Ms Nicoll Brown's: Mr Aldrick Cribb's: Mr Sritharan Dutton's: Mr Hughan Roper's: Mr Cochrane Spurgeon's: Mr Geldeard Tulley's: Mrs Fitzgerald Tyson's: Mrs Anderson
Catering, Facilities, Grounds, Health & Safety, Support Staff	Mr Born (Bursar)
Co-curricular matters and educational visits, Thursday afternoon activities	Mr Green (Assistant Head, Co-curricular & Partnerships)
Curricular, academic and timetabling matters	Mrs McAuliffe (Deputy Head [Academic])
Daily running. Teaching staff, duty staff, all general matters	Ms Chandler (Deputy Head [Personnel & Administration])
Pastoral issues. Discipline, learning, teaching, all general matters	Mr Skinnard (Senior Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead)
General issues or aspects of school life and anything not covered above	Dr Savage (Headmaster)

Complaints – whom to contact (Junior School)

NB: If in doubt please contact Mr Severino, Head of Alleyn's Junior School.

Area of responsibility	Member of staff to contact
Day-to-day management of the Infants Department, including EYFS provision	Mrs Gentry-Peacock (Head of Infants)
Day-to-day management of Junior School, Curricular and co-curricular	Mrs Olley (Deputy Head)
Catering, Facilities, Grounds, Health & Safety, Support Staff	Mr Born (Bursar)
General issues or aspects of school life and anything not covered above	Mr Severino (Headmaster)

