Hampton Court House

Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedure

For Parents of Current or Prospective Pupils

Last Updated: April 2026

Next Review: May 2027

Reviewed by KVI

Introduction

The Hampton Court House complaints policy applies to parents of all current pupils including those in the EYFS. Hampton Court House is dedicated to providing the best possible education and support for all its pupils. This means having a clear, fair, and efficient procedure for dealing with any complaints to or against the school, so that any issues that arise can be dealt with as swiftly and effectively as possible. This policy applies to registered pupils and parents of registered pupils at the school. Complaints raised by staff are covered under the Employee Grievance Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

All school staff are made aware of complaints procedures and expected to review this document regularly in order that they are familiar with our process of dealing with complaints and can be of the most assistance when an issue is brought to their attention. Hampton Court House makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the school's website and in the school office during the school day, and Hampton Court House will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.

In accordance with paragraph 33 to Part 7, of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Hampton Court House will make available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the school is within the scope of this procedure. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done or acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, raises in good faith.

This document explains the feedback/ complaints procedure. This procedure is not intended to be the only means by which parent and pupil feedback is listened to and addressed, but it is an essential tool. If it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this procedure, you will be advised accordingly, given an explanation and provided with revised timescales.

This document does not apply to complaints about:

- Pupil admissions
- Pupil exclusions
- EHC Plans
- Appeals relating to internal assessment decisions for external qualifications
- Disciplinary issues relating to members of staff

Each of these follows its own process of complaints and appeals, which are outlined in their relevant policies.

Note that if a complaint regards Child Protection or Safeguarding. The issue will be immediately referred to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for urgent review and may refer the matter on to Multi Agency Safeguarding teams as necessary.

For more information on our school's provision for protecting our pupils, please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Anonymous complaints will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may or may not be examined under this document. You may raise an anonymous complaint or ask for redaction of your personal details using the feedback form on the parent portal.

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 your child's form teacher (or, where applicable, form tutor). This can be in person, by letter, telephone or email. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the form teacher (or Form Tutor) cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him or her to consult the Head Teacher.

Complaints made directly to the Head Teacher at this stage will usually be referred to the relevant form teacher (or Form Tutor), unless the Head Teacher deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

The form teacher (or Form Tutor) will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or in the event that the Form Teacher (or Form Tutor) and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this policy.

We encourage parents to approach staff with any concerns they may have and aim to resolve all issues with open dialogue and mutual understanding. We encourage staff to address concerns raised to them in a timely fashion. If, however, the complaint is against the Head Teacher, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors, Mr Aatif Hassan.

If you prefer not to speak to your class teacher/ form tutor or your Deputy Head or if your complaint is about leadership or management of the school, you should raise your concern in writing. You can send informal feedback, including compliments, complaints or concerns using the Feedback Form on the Parent Portal, or by emailing feedback@hchnet.co.uk – if you have any further questions or need any help with getting any information or clarification please email us on the above address.

<u>Informal conversation</u>

Once a query or concern has been raised, you may be invited to an informal conversation with a member of staff to discuss your concerns. You are welcome to bring a friend, partner or, in the case of a pupil who has raised a concern, a parent to this conversation.

It may be appropriate for a pupil to attend if their parent has raised a concern, depending on the nature of the issue.
Staff have a responsibility to ensure that you understand any future points of action that have been agreed upon in this conversation and should make a record of what has been discussed, as well as any outcomes and a plan of action, if one has been agreed. All staff will do their best to ensure that your concerns are dealt with appropriately and efficiently but if you cannot come to an agreement, or are dissatisfied with the outcome, you can give formal Feedback in writing via the Hampton Court House Parent Portal.

There is no suggested time-scale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion although it would be expected that most issues would be resolved within 10 school days.

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 Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Head Teacher will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. If it is not possible to meet this time frame then an initial telephone conversation will be arranged and minutes taken of the conversation.

It may be necessary for the Head Teacher to carry out further investigations. The Head Teacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
Once the Head Teacher 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 within 5 working days. The Head Teacher will give reasons for his or her decision.
If the complaint is against the Head Teacher, the Governors will call for a full report from the Head Teacher and for all the relevant documents. The Governors may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Governors are satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing within 15 working days. The Governors will give reasons for their decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should write to the headteacher within 5 school days in order to proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 Appeals Process

Parents may appeal the school's decision to exclude a pupil if:

- The child has been excluded for more than 5 days
- the exclusion means they'll miss a public examination

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution as

above), they must put their complaint in writing to the Governors, address written complaints for a panel to the Chair of Governors, Mr Aatif Hassan c/o the School. The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.

The Governors will make provision for a hearing before a panel of at least three people who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. Where there is a panel hearing for dealing with the complaint, one person will be independent of the management and the running of the school. The Governors will be responsible for appointment of the panel.

The Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place **within ten working days**, to determine whether the school has followed the feedback and complaints policy. 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 five working days prior to the hearing.**

The chair of the panel will be designated from within the panel. Panel members will be familiar with and have access to the complaints policy. The panel will give careful consideration to how the complainant can be made to feel most comfortable presenting to the panel, especially in the case of a young child having to present or explain information.

The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' 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 facts considered relevant, the Panel will make findings and may make recommendations.

Appeals procedure

The Appeals Panel will determine the procedure to be followed to ensure that it is best placed to deal with the issues arising from the feedback. The procedure for an appeal is usually as follows.

1. The complainant and school representative will enter the hearing together.
2. The chair will introduce the panel members and outline the process.
3. The complainant will explain the complaint.
4. The panel may question the complainant.
5. The school's representative will explain the school's actions.
6. The complainant and panel may question the school's representative.
7. The complainant will sum up their complaint.
8. The school's representative will sum up the school's actions.
9. The chair will explain that both parties will hear from the panel within 10 working days.
10. Both parties will leave together while the panel decides.

The chair of the panel may adapt the above procedure as they see fit to ensure all parties are able to attend and participate. This includes the use of MS Teams or other video conferencing software.

The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, **within ten working days of the hearing**, although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following the hearing. The decision of the panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about as well as the Governors and Head Teacher. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and the Executive Head.

The appeals panel may:

- Dismiss all or part of the complaint
- Uphold all or part of the complaint
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Evaluate all the evidence available and recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures as a preventative step against similar problems arising in the future.

If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State. Complaints can be submitted online at https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school.

Timeframe for dealing with complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within 5 working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school will complete all stages of the procedure within 28 days

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all formal complaints, whether they are resolved at the informal stage, the formal stage or proceed to a panel hearing and any action taken by the school as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint is upheld). At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Letters, notes and emails relating to the complaints
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

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 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.
We will review the complaints procedure every year.

Vexatious/persistent complaints

Whilst it is hoped that this document will reduce any dissatisfaction with the school, it is acknowledged that there may be rare occasions where a complainant continues to be dissatisfied with the school and the outcomes achieved under the complaints procedure. Where a complainant attempts to re-open an issue which has already been dealt with under the complaints procedure, the chair of the Board will contact them to inform them that the matter has already been dealt with and that either that stage of the policy has been exhausted or that the complaints procedure has been exhausted and the matter is considered closed.

Where further correspondence is received on the same matter, this may be considered vexatious and the school will be under no obligation to respond to that correspondence. If the complainant subsequently contacts the school again about the same issue, the school can choose not to respond. The normal circumstance in which we will not respond is if:

- The school has taken every reasonable step to address the complainant's needs, and the school's position has been clearly set out in writing together with the complainant'soptions
- The complainant is contacting the school repeatedly but making substantially the same points each time
- The school reasonably believes the aim of the contact is to cause disruption or inconvenience
- That the complainant acts or communicates in an inappropriate way towards school staff.

Once the school has decided that it is appropriate to stop responding, the complainant will be informed in writing. The school will ensure when making this decision that complainants making any new complaint are heard, and that the school acts reasonably.

Number of formal complaints raised

In the past academic year, the School has received no formal complaints.

Organisations

Hampton Court House will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. The record of any such complaints will be **kept for at least three years.** Parents may complain directly to Ofsted, this applies to all children, including those in the EYFS.

EYFS
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 on request.

ISI
If you are not satisfied following the completion of all three stages of the complaints

policy you may wish to raise the matter with the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Information on how to raise a concern with ISI can be found here: https://www.isi.net/safeguarding/concerns

Ofsted
If you wish to make a complaint to Ofsted about the school, you can contact their general helpline on 0300 123 1231; or request advice by email on enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
To make a formal complaint, you can complete a form online at http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/onlinecomplaints/ or write to:
Ofsted
Piccadilly
Gate Store
Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Staff complaints

Staff who have a concern about a colleague or a volunteer member of staff should refer to our

Low level concerns policy and whistleblowing policy. The procedure for dealing with any other staff complaints or employment grievances is set out in the school's staff discipline, conduct and grievance policy.

Links to policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistle blowing policy
- Employee Grievance Policy