



ROEDEAN MOIRA HOUSE COMPLAINTS POLICY (PARENTS) 2018-19

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Introduction

Roedean Moira House has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school with care and in accordance with this procedure. Roedean Moira House makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils on the school's website and in the school office during the school day, and Roedean Moira House will ensure that parents of pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and of the form in which it is published or available.

This policy applies to every child in the school from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to the Sixth Form and as such includes boys in the EYFS.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Roedean Moira House will make available to 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.

What constitutes a complaint?

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, failed to do something that it should have done or has acted unfairly. Parents can be assured that all 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 raise in good faith.

The three-stage Complaints Procedure

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 contact their daughter's Form Tutor in the first instance. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a Head of Section or a Head of Faculty.
- Complaints made directly to a Head of Section or Head of Faculty will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor, unless the Head of Section or Head of Faculty deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

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- The Form Tutor will log a record of all concerns and complaints on PASS and will bring them to the attention of their Head of Section. Should the matter not be resolved within one week, or in the event that the 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 Procedure - to make a formal complaint in writing.
- If the complaint is against the Principal, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of the School Council.

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 Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Principal or Head of School will meet or speak with the parents concerned, within five 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 Principal or Head of School to carry out further investigations.
- The Principal will keep records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Principal 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 in writing of the outcomes of the investigation, the decision taken and the reasons for the decision. This will be within 14 days of the formal complaint being received.
- If the complaint is against the Principal, the Chair of the School Council will call for a full report from the Principal and for all the relevant documents. The Chair 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 Chair is 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. The Chair will give reasons for his/her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision made, they may appeal the decision to the School Council and move to Stage 3.
- Parents of girls or boys in the EYFS will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of the School Council, who has been appointed by the School Council 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 complaints, one of whom should be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members should be appointed by the School Council. The Chair of the School Council, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within 21 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 particulars will be supplied to all parties not later than five days prior to the hearing.
- 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.

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- 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 five days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents within 7 days informing them of its decision and reasons for it. (The decision of the Panel will be final). The Panel's findings, and recommendations if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Principal, the School Council and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy will be held by the Principal and will be provided to inspectors upon request.

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's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 20 working days. Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 20 working days. Please note that, for the purposes of this procedure, 'working days' refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time.

Records

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all 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
- 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.

Roedean Moira House will provide ISI/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 or to ISI if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements. Schools must make available details of how to contact Ofsted and/ or ISI:

- Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 1231 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net

In 2016-2017, 2 formal complaints were dealt with.



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Related policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Employee Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Health Safety Handbook
- Boarding Staff Handbook
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools
- ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, Regulatory Requirements
- Teachers' Standards
- Departmental Handbook
- Complaints Policy (Pupils)

POLICY REVIEWED BY SCHOOL: May 2018

POLICY REVIEWED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: June 2017

NEXT REVIEW: June 2019