

# Maidstone Grammar School



## Complaints Procedure

### Preamble

Maidstone Grammar School seeks to provide an appropriate education for every student in its care where students are treated fairly and are able to achieve and flourish as individuals in a safe and secure environment. We accept however that at times we will fall short of this in the eyes of some students and their parents and that when this happens it is important that their complaints are handled quickly and appropriately.

### Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is a problem that has arisen for a student or parent that has not been capable of being solved by reference to normal procedures, or a situation that is of such severity that it needs, in the opinion of the complainant, to be brought to the immediate attention of the Headmaster or, in the event of a complaint being made against the Headmaster, to the Chair of Governors.

### Concerns

- Most parents will at times have concerns about the progress or welfare of their son/daughter. These should be handled by reference to the normal management systems of the school.
- If the concern is about a particular subject then the concern should be raised with the subject teacher, Head of Department or the Deputy Headmaster.
- If the concern is about a student's welfare then it should be raised with the Student Services Department.
- If the concern is regarding an issue of Child Protection then it should be raised with the Deputy Head (Staff and Students).

Only if a concern has not been handled appropriately and resolved quickly is it likely to become a formal complaint.

## **Parental Complaints**

### **Making a Complaint**

- All complaints should be made in writing.
- All complaints should be addressed to the Headmaster, unless the complaint concerns the actions or decisions of the Headmaster.
- If the complaint is about the Headmaster, it should be addressed to the Chair of Governors and sent via the Clerk to the Governors.
- If any other member of staff receives a formal letter of complaint, it must be passed to the Headmaster immediately upon receipt.

### **Investigation of Ordinary Complaints**

- When the Headmaster receives a complaint from a parent, he will acknowledge receipt and explain to the parent how he intends to handle the complaint and in what timescale the parent should receive a response.
- The Headmaster will then appoint a member of the senior management team to investigate the complaint and complete a report on the matter for the Headmaster's consideration.
- In carrying out the investigation, the senior manager will inform any member of staff named in the complaint (normally within 24 hours of the complaint being received) of the issue and seek their view of the matter.
- The senior manager will also need to interview students in carrying out most investigations. This will include the student of the parent instigating the complaint.
- In carrying out interviews with staff about a complaint, the senior manager must follow all the procedures laid down in the KCC staff manual (which the Governors have now adopted and which is available to all staff from the Bursar).
- When the investigation is complete, the senior manager will discuss their report with the Headmaster, who will decide what action should be taken.
- The Headmaster will then communicate the outcome of the complaint investigation and actions taken to the parent.
- If the parent is not satisfied they have a right of appeal against the Headmaster's action to the Governors of the School.

### **Investigation of Complaints against the Headmaster**

- The Clerk to Governors must ensure that the Chair of Governors is informed immediately of any complaint against the actions of the Headmaster.
- The Chair of Governors will decide whether the complaint can be investigated by himself/herself or whether it should be referred to a complaints sub committee of the Governing Body.
- Following investigation by either route, the Chair of Governors will reply to the complainant with the outcome of the investigation.
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation by the Chair of Governors then it must be referred to a complaints sub-committee of the Governing Body.
- If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of a sub-committee of the Governing Body then they should refer the matter to the Area Education Office of the Local Education Authority (details can be provided by request at the school office).

**Complaints by Students**

The procedure to be followed by students in the event of their having a complaint against their treatment in school is laid down in the School's Behaviour Policy. The basic procedure is that they should appeal to the Learning Manager. In addition students have the right of appeal to the Headmaster against any decision taken about them by the Learning Manager or a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team.

**Complaints by the General Public**

These will be handled in a similar way to complaints made by parents.