

### **Arun Court School – Complaints Procedure – updated January 2021**

*We pride ourselves on the quality of the teaching, therapeutic and pastoral care provided to our pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated sympathetically and efficiently in line with this policy and resolved as soon as possible. Arun Court School will try to handle every concern or complaint in a positive way with the aim of resolving the issue(s) and where necessary the School's systems and procedures may be reviewed in light of the complaint.*

*Arun Court wants to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction with any part of the School. Arun Court recognises that a dissatisfaction that is not resolved quickly and fairly can cause resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and the School culture. Parents or pupils should never feel or be made to feel that a complaint would not be taken seriously or that it will affect a pupil's opportunities within the School.*

*Arun Court feels this is good practice for all those concerned and helps promote the School's belief in safeguarding and welfare.*

#### **We recommend that you carefully read other relevant policies in combination with this one:**

- *Safeguarding Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Bodycams Policy*
- *Anti-bullying Policy*
- *Curriculum, Teaching, Assessment and Learning Policy*
- *Attendance Policy*
- *Admissions & continuation of placement Policy*
- *Exams Policy*
- *Please also make sure under 'continuation of placement' you have read our stance on exclusions carefully – this can also be found on the LEA tab on the school website.*

**Next Review at Governing Body: August 2021**



### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution:**

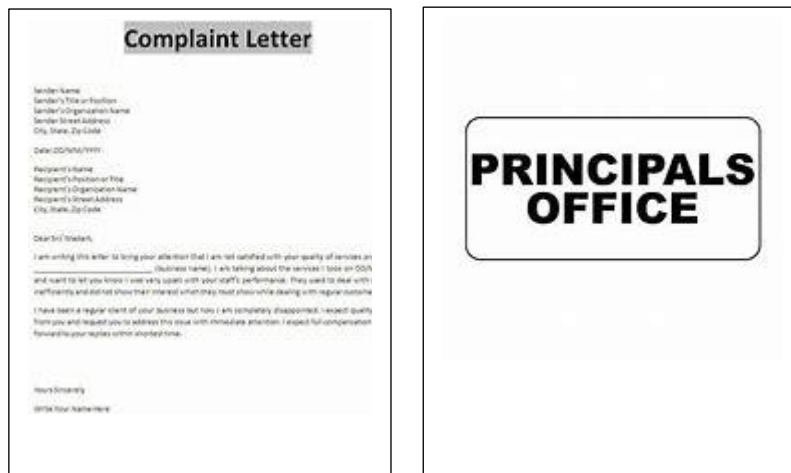
Arun Court School hopes that most concerns or complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. If the complaint involves discrimination, harassment or victimisation these are taken very seriously and may need to be dealt with at Stage 2 – Formal Resolution, without action at Stage 1 – Informal Resolution.

If parents have a complaint or initial concern they should contact their son/daughter's **Key worker or Form Tutor**. 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 more senior staff member such as the **Associate Principal of School**.

If the complaint is regarding financial issues it should be put in writing and sent to the **School Associate Executive Head (commissioning)**, who will aim to respond within 5 working days.

**The Form Tutor** will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the dates on which they were received, so please be very clear that you are making a complaint not just discussing progress. A concern which has not been resolved by informal means within 15 working days should then **be put in writing** and dealt with in accordance with Stage 2 – Formal Resolution.

Informal concerns as described above are not recorded or stored.



**Stage 2 – Formal Resolution:**

If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis under Stage 1, it should then be **put in writing**. This should provide full details of the complaint and enclosing any relevant documentation and be sent to the **Principal of School**. They will consider the complaint and then decide on an appropriate course of action.

In most cases, they will speak to the parents concerned, within 7 working 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 to carry out further investigations**.

They will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. These records of complaints will be made available to ISI or Ofsted, on request.

Once the **Principal of School** 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 25 working days. They will also give reasons for their decision and **all written records relating to the complaint will be kept**.

**Please be aware that a complaint received close to the end of term is likely to take longer to resolve. Please be aware that a complaint made in the absence of the Principal may be dealt with, in exactly the same manner, by the Associate Principal of School.**

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision under Formal Resolution, **a letter should be written to the Chairman of The External Moderation Team within 5 working days of the Principal’s decision**, highlighting the complaint and Stage 3 of this procedure will commence.



### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing:**

**The Panel will consist of at least 3 people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and the Local Education Authority that the child’s EHCP sits under will also be invited (usually this will be a representative at case worker level, however the LEA will not always feel it is necessary to attend) Usually the panel at stage 3 will include the Executive Head Teacher (also Proprietor) or the Associate Executive Head.**

The Panel will not consider any new areas of complaint which have not previously been raised as part of the complaints procedure.

The Panel’s task is to establish the facts surrounding the complaint(s) that has been made by **considering the documents provided by both parties, which should be supplied no later than 3 working 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 is not 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 15 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it.** The Panel’s findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Principal and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint has been made.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. A written record of the complaint(s) will be kept by the School. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.



**Stage 4 – Surrey or Hampshire LEA further Investigation**

Parents who still feel that the situation has not been resolved can complain directly to the LEA / Surrey CC above caseworker level; for many of our students this will mean contacting a Surrey SEN Team Quadrant leader . Your Caseworker will be able to provide you with details of the relevant individual. **The LEA management level team may decide to visit the school or carry out a provider inspection.**



Ofsted · Phone

Clive House, 70 Petty France, London SW1H 9EX

**0300 013 0415**

Complaints can also be made directly by writing to Ofsted , or the Department of Education on 0370 000 2288.

The DFE / Ofsted will not investigate disputes about fees or complaints about pupils no longer at the school. Please remember that you can complain to Ofsted **if you feel there is a problem with the whole school**. You must first follow the complaints procedure of the school. Following that, Ofsted will decide whether the school needs inspecting. As a rule, Ofsted will respond back to you within 30 working days. They will inform you whether they plan to investigate or not.