



**MAYFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL**  
**GRAVESEND**

**COMPLAINTS POLICY**  
**AND PROCEDURES**

## Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend

### COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These complaints procedures have been set up by the Governing Body and apply to the complaints from 1) parents, 2) pupils, 3) staff and 4) other persons. Excluded from these procedures are complaints for which statutory complaints procedures exist (curriculum, sex education, admissions, exclusions, special educational needs, staff grievances).

The School is concerned to ensure excellent relationships with parents and the community which it serves. Any complaints will be dealt with in a positive way and the issues raised will be followed up in order to make improvements and ensure the School becomes more effective.

#### **In the handling of complaints we aim to:**

- Be polite and understanding
- Respond swiftly if possible
- Try to offer a remedy or refer to someone who can
- Record the matter in the appropriate way and place
- Improve the aspect of our service about which the complaint was received
- Give feedback on the improvement, where appropriate
- Review our procedures at least annually
- Offer appropriate training to staff where necessary.

Complaints to Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend are usually in the form of a telephone call or letter. These can be received by any member of staff but are more likely to be directed to Senior Staff, Learning Leaders and Faculty Leaders. The General Office is usually the front line in taking the complaint over the telephone and need therefore to be familiar with procedures. The general public will commonly refer everything to the Head, although in practice she may not be the 'right' person to deal with all such complaints. The office staff are therefore trained to direct these as appropriate.

#### **1. Complaints from parents or members of the public**

The School complaints procedure applies only to non-Curriculum complaints. Procedures with respect to Curriculum Complaints are listed in the attached document.

##### **a) Informal Complaints**

Informal complaints of a minor nature should be referred to the Form Tutor or Learning Leader in the first instance.

Where parents are not satisfied with the initial response or where complaints, although informal, are of a more serious nature the matter should be referred to a Senior member of staff.

##### **b) Response to a letter/e-mail**

- The initial complaint is recorded on a complaint slip.
- A holding letter should be sent within 2 working days, explaining that the issue is being investigated and giving the contact name of the member of staff who will be taking action on the complainant's behalf.
- An investigation will be initiated which may include reference to previous incidents, students' files and a variety of members of staff.

- Once the matter has been considered as widely as possible, a solution to the problem will endeavour to be found and agreed upon by the relevant staff.
- The contact name given in the original holding letter will then get back to the complainant with the results of the investigation and offer a solution to the problem.
- This response will either be by telephone, letter, e-mail or in person at a pre-arranged meeting.
- There may need to be an extended period of follow up, whilst the effect of the solution agreed upon is monitored.

### **c) Response to a telephone call**

- The initial complaint is recorded on a complaint slip.
- The member of staff receiving the call will listen to the complaint sympathetically and patiently.
- The immediate response will be calm and understanding, usually including an apology for the fact that they have felt the need to complain.
- We will endeavour to give an immediate explanation or try to pass on the caller to someone who may be able to help them.
- If the complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, a message will be passed on to the appropriate member of staff who will either:
  - a Return the call within 2 working days.
  - b Send a holding letter as above, thus initiating that procedure.

### **d) Appeals**

If not satisfied the complainant should write to the Clerk to the Governors asking for an appeal. An Appeals Committee of 3 governors will be formed to hear the appeal.

### **e) Final Appeal**

If the complainant is still dissatisfied the matter may be referred to the *Education Funding Authority* – by post to Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ

## **2. Complaints from students**

Complaints from students may be made via any of the following routes:

the Form Tutor  
 the Learning Leader  
 the Key Stage Co-ordinator  
 the School Council  
 the Suggestions Box  
 the Year Group Senior Officials  
 the Headteacher.

## **Response to Student Complaints**

- The initial complaint is recorded on a complaint slip.
- These are most properly handled by the Form Tutor or Learning Leader in the first instance.
- Depending upon the seriousness of the complaint, the member of staff will either carry out the appropriate investigation themselves or pass it on to a more senior colleague
- The student will always be treated with courtesy and patience and will be offered a solution to their complaint as soon as possible.
- The issue may require a longer period of monitoring in order to ensure that the solution is working.
- If the matter is serious it will be referred to the Headteacher for advice and/or information. Parents may be informed.

### **3. Complaints from staff**

Whilst a grievance procedure exists we should try to resolve all concerns informally in the first instance.

It is advisable that staff raise their concerns with their line manager in the first instance.

If the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction it should be referred to the relevant Assistant Headteacher, who will look into the matter and advise accordingly.

Should the matter still be unresolved it will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher.

### **4. Bring about Improvement in Response to Complaints**

- The internal management structure of the school ensures that line managers are always informed of a complaint received by a more junior colleague.
- The memo slip system is used for internal monitoring purposes and kept on file as appropriate.
- Other monitoring systems are overseen by the Headteacher *and other members of the Senior Leadership Team who also make contributions to any discussions/review processes and implement improvements as appropriate.*

### **Complaints register**

The *Headteacher's PA* will maintain a record of all formal complaints.