

EDENFIELD GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL [EGHS]

Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

This Policy aims to ensure that:

- Parents/ Guardians know that Edenfield Girls' High School takes complaints seriously and will respond in a courteous and efficient manner;
- An effective procedure for making and adjudicating complaints (including appeals) from parents/ guardians is established;
- Parents/ Guardians wishing to make a complaint know how to do so;
- There is a separate procedure for dealing with parental concerns which fall short of a formal complaint;
- All those involved in handling a complaint make every effort to resolve matters quickly and amicably;
- Response to complaints will be made within a reasonable period of time, and where necessary appropriate action will be taken.

Raising concerns informally

Parents/ guardians are advised to raise their concern initially on an informal basis by contacting the relevant member of staff. This can be done by telephone, email or letter.

In the vast majority of cases, it is anticipated that, initially at least, the relevant member of staff will be the pupil's Form Tutor.

Where parents/guardians do not believe that the matter is suitable for informal resolution or they are not satisfied with the response to the informal complaint, they should inform the Head teacher verbally by contacting on the school phone or in writing.

Parents/ guardians should note that, where the Head Teacher is the subject of the complaint, a separate procedure applies, details of which can be found in paragraphs 4 below.

Investigating Complaints

As soon as possible after the complaint has been lodged, a senior member of staff appointed by the Head Teacher will contact the parents/ guardian concerned. The purpose of this contact is to make an initial response and to explain how the school intends to investigate the matter, how long the investigation is likely to take and when to expect a response. Where in the course of an investigation it becomes clear that this date is likely to be exceeded, the parent/guardian will be informed of a new response date.

At the end of the investigation, the parent/ guardian will be informed of the outcome. This will include the conclusion reached, the reasons for it and any action taken or proposed.

It is the school's policy that complaints made by parents/ guardians will not adversely affect their daughter's interests.

The school hopes that a parent/ guardian making a complaint will be satisfied with the outcome. Certainly, it will make every reasonable effort to ensure that each complaint is fully and properly investigated and that the issues raised are considered in a fair and professional manner.

However, where the parents/ guardian are still dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation or the manner in which the complaint was handled by the school, they should put their complaint in writing to the Chair of the School Governors at the school address, or via email.

Mr I Ashraf
i.ashraf@fountainsofknowledge.com

The Panel

It is particularly important that the parents/ guardians state as clearly and fully as possible the reasons why they wish a panel to hear a complaint.

Upon receipt of a request for a panel hearing, the chair of Governors will convene a panel to hear the complaint within 10 working days of receiving the complaint.

The panel will consist of at least three people. Parents will be notified of the names of the panel members. None of the panel members will have been directly involved either in the matters detailed in the complaint or its investigation and adjudication prior to this point. Further, at least one will be independent of the management and running of the school.

The appeal panel will have access to all relevant documentations.

The parents/guardians will be invited to attend the panel hearing. They will also be invited to produce documentation to be circulated in advance to panel members. In addition, the parents/guardians will be invited to bring a friend or a relative (should they wish to do so), not a legal representative to the panel hearing. The panel will make the final decision in respect of the complaint.

A copy of any findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant within five working days from the date of the hearing, and where relevant, the person complained about, and will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Head Teacher.

Complaints against the Head Teacher

Where the Head Teacher is the subject of the complaint, the matter should be referred directly and in writing to the Chair of the School Governors Mr I Ashraf at the school address. The Chair will then contact the parents/ guardians in order to explain how the complaint will be investigated, how long an investigation is likely to take and when they might expect a final response.

Where the Governors believe that the complaint merits it, they will appoint a person to investigate the complaint and report his/ her findings to them. After considering this report, the Governors will then write to the parents/ guardians within five working days. This letter will include the conclusion reached, the reasons for it and any action taken or proposed.

Disciplinary action taken against staff

It may be the case that, as a result of a complaint made by a parent/guardian, disciplinary action may be taken against a member of staff employed at EGHS.

Where this occurs, any such action will be handled confidentially within school.

Confidentiality

Subject to the paragraphs below, any complaint or concern, viewpoint, etc. raised by parents/ guardians will be treated as confidential.

Knowledge of the complaint will be restricted to those who, for various reasons, need to know about it. This will include the Head Teacher, the member(s) of staff investigating the complaint and any other member of staff otherwise involved. In addition, there are circumstances where the Governors of EGHS may be informed.

On occasion, however, it may be necessary to inform third parties of the complaint and, possibly, the identities of those involved. The most obvious example of this is where an investigation suggests that a criminal offence has taken place. In such circumstances, school would cease its investigation and refer the matter to the relevant external agencies.

Written records

In order to comply with school's obligations under standard 7 33(k) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended), a written record will be kept of all complaints, including whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing, and recorded any action taken by the school as a

result of those complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld).

Written records will be treated as confidential and processed in accordance with GDPR requirements. This does not apply to the requirement of the school to provide parents and other interested parties with information about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding year, nor to inspectors conducting inspections under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, or to the Secretary of State, should they ask for access to such records.

Dealing with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complaints and behaviour

We reserve the right to reject a vexatious complaint. Vexatious complaints may be characterised (but are not limited to) the following:

- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious.
- Insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason.
- Insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner.
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance.
- Demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value.

EGHS will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated in accordance with this Complaints Policy. If there are concerns that a complaint may fall within the category of being unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the Headteacher will seek guidance and advice from the Governors.

If a complainant is found to be unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious the Governors will write to the complainant advising them of the decision and the reasons for this.

There is no internal route of appeal against the decision that a complaint is persistent and/or vexatious.

If future complaints do raise substantive new issues, these will be investigated in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in the light of any changed circumstances in our school or the local area.

This policy was adopted on	Reviewed by	Date for review	Date of next review
20 May 2019	Imran Ashraf Khaleda Begum Naman Yasin	01-09-2023	01-09-2025