



## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Solefield School

Solefield School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may arise. This policy will show you how to use our complaints system. This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is available on the open part of the school's website and is also available to parents (both prospective and current) from the school office.

**A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction which needs a response.**

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate

#### **'How should I complain?**

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

Any member of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, to raise academic or social matters with the Form Teacher, sports concerns with the Director of Sport. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example, a Deputy Head or the Headmaster.

#### **'I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me?'**

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Please contact a member of staff, as described above.

#### **'I am not sure whether to complain or not'.**

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to complain, if in doubt, you should contact the school as we are here to help.

### **‘What will happen next?’**

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date within 1 week by which time you will receive a response. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

### **‘What happens about confidentiality?’**

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Headmaster and those directly involved. The Chairman of Governors may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents will not rebound adversely on their children.

We would point out that anonymous complaints will not be pursued. Action which needed to be taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the school.

All correspondence and records regarding a complaint will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

### **‘What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?’**

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Headmaster will offer to refer the matter to the Chairman of Governors. Alternatively, you may wish to write direct to the Chairman. The Chairman will call for a full report from the Head, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding within five working days. This may result in a positive solution, but if it does not, the Chairman will invite you to a meeting. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter would be referred to the school’s Conciliation Committee who will meet within five working days of notification. It is their task to look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner. The Conciliation Committee will comprise at least three and up to five Committee members (not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint) including the Convener and at least one person independent of the management and running of the school. The Committee Convener will invite you to a meeting. You will be asked if there are any papers you would like to have circulated beforehand. As with the Chairman’s meeting, you will be invited to bring a friend with you.

The findings and recommendations of the panel will be

(i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant within five working days and, where relevant, to the person complained about;

(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the Headmaster;

A written record of all complaints is kept for at least three years, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. The school has not received any formal complaints in the previous three years up to the date of this policy.

We hope that we will be able to satisfy your concerns. If we do not, you may wish as a last resort to seek independent legal advice.

### **Parents of boys in Reception**

Parents of boys in Reception are entitled to make a complaint directly to OFSTED at:

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA  
0300 123 4666

Also, a complaint may be made to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) at:

CAP House  
9 - 12 Long Lane  
London  
EC1A 9HA  
Telephone 020 7600 0100

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the boys in our care.

Dougal Philps & Governors  
Updated 1.09.11  
Review 1.09.12