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## Complaints Policy

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## 1. Introduction

We endeavour to ensure that the Reigate Grammar School Riyadh (RGSR) provides the very best education for all our students and that our whole community feels safe, secure and supported. However, we acknowledge that members of our community may occasionally have concerns over specific matters that may result in a complaint. In such circumstances the following procedure should be followed. Complainants can expect their concern to be treated with care, respect and in confidence.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

RGSR aims to be fair, open and transparent when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding, and in all cases, we put the interests of the student above all other issues. We endeavour to provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

We aim to address all concerns within the timeframes set out at each stage. However, where there are exceptional circumstances resulting in delay, the complainant will be notified of this and informed of any revised timescales as soon as possible.

Complainants are requested to inform the school of their concern as soon as possible as it can be difficult to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

## 3. Child Protection

Concerns regarding Child Protection are outside the scope of this procedure. If there are concerns regarding Child Protection, please contact RGSR's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Senior School, Ms. Kirstin McLintock (Email: [Kirsten.McLintock@rgs.edu.sa](mailto:Kirsten.McLintock@rgs.edu.sa)), or RGSR's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Preparatory School, Mr. David Owen (Email: [david.owen@rgs.edu.sa](mailto:david.owen@rgs.edu.sa)), or by telephoning the school office.

## 4. Complaint Process

### Stage 1 (Informal)

1. We operate an 'open door policy' at RGSR whereby members of our community are able to approach any member of staff to discuss matters of concern. This includes the Headteachers who can be approached informally before, after or during the school day.

By having such an approach and being approachable and visible to our community, it is hoped that most complaints and concerns can be resolved swiftly, professionally and informally. Often there is a misunderstanding which can be easily resolved. The person best placed to deal with any initial concern or complaint will usually be your child's teacher or the year lead; however, you may wish to contact the Heads of Department, Primary Key Stage Leaders or Headteachers. If you are not sure who to contact, please contact the school office.

2. We aim to acknowledge receipt of a complaint or concern received by telephone, email or letter within 1 working day during term time and as soon as practicable during the school holidays, and no later than 1 working day once school has resumed.
3. We will always try to resolve any informal complaints within 5 working days of them being raised, except when they are raised in school holidays, in which case we will try to resolve them within 5 working days once school has resumed. If necessary, the staff member initially contacted will speak to any other relevant staff (such as another teacher) in order to investigate your concern.
4. If the matter is not resolved, or if you have a serious complaint which you feel cannot be dealt with by your child's teacher or form tutor, Heads of Schools, Heads of Department, Year Leaders or Primary Key Stage Leaders, you should proceed to Stage 2 of this procedure.

## Stage 2 (Formal)

1. If the complaint or concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis through initial discussion at Stage 1 above, or a concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, a formal complaint can be made, in writing, to the Head Preparatory School ([stephen.deady@rgs.edu.sa](mailto:stephen.deady@rgs.edu.sa)) or Head Senior School ([atthar.malik@rgs.edu.sa](mailto:atthar.malik@rgs.edu.sa)) making reference to the Complaints Policy. The Heads will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days, or if the complaint is during a school holiday, the Head will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days once school has resumed.
2. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases the Head will meet or speak with the complainant, normally within 5 working days of receiving the complaint (during term time), to discuss the matter.
3. If an investigation is needed, the Head will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or students involved. The Head may ask to meet the complainant for a discussion of the problem. A written record will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
4. Following the investigation, the Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. The complainant will be informed of this decision, although some details may need to be withheld if they relate to individuals such as a staff member or a student in the community.
5. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible; the school's target is to give its decision within 15 working days of the complaint being received if the complaint is lodged during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods and certainly no later than 15 working days from the resumption of school.
6. We hope that complaints escalated to Stage 2 will be resolved by the Head, however if the complaint cannot be resolved at this stage the Head will meet with the complainant to outline the next steps.

## Stage 3 (Board Hearing)

1. If the matter is still not resolved at Stage 2, or if the complaint is about an action of the Head personally, then the complainant may wish to proceed to Stage 3 and ask for their complaint to be referred to the RGSR Board. This must be made in writing, within 10 working days of the Head's decision at Stage 2 and should state that a request is being made for a Board Hearing.
2. The complaint should be addressed to the RGSR Board and sent via email to the Executive Headteacher ([k.murcia@hedaya.edu.sa](mailto:k.murcia@hedaya.edu.sa)) who is a member of the Board. The request for a Board Hearing will be acknowledged within 3 working days of the RGSR Board receiving it, or as soon as practicable during school holidays and certainly no later than 3 working days from the resumption of school.
3. In the email to the RGSR Board the complainant should provide a list of complaint(s) made against the school and which are believed not to have been resolved satisfactorily at Stage 2, along with the remedies sought in respect of each. The complainant should also state whether he/she wishes to attend the hearing, or whether the Board may deal with the matter based only on written submissions.
4. The Board will inform the Head that a complaint has been lodged, and the Board will convene as soon as possible, normally within 15 working days of receipt of the Stage 3 complaint. If the complainant has requested to attend the hearing, he/she will be invited to attend and speak to the Board; the complainant may be accompanied to the Board hearing if he/she wishes. The Head will usually also attend the hearing. If the complainant decides not to attend the hearing, the Board will still convene.
5. After due consideration of all the facts they consider relevant, the Board will reach a decision and may make recommendations. The Board's findings will be sent in writing or emailed to the complainant, the Head, and where relevant, the person(s) complained about. The letter will state any reasons for the decision reached and recommendations (if any) made by the Board. The communication of the final decision should be reached by the complainant within 15 working days of the Board hearing. The decision reached by the Board is final.

6. A written record of all formal complaints and their outcome, including the action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld), will be kept by the Head, including whether they have been resolved at Stage 2 or proceeded to a Board hearing. Such records will be kept for one year after the student leaves the school. The panel's findings and recommendations will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the Board.

## 5. Confidentiality

Complainants are assured that all complaints and expressions of concern, whether raised informally or formally, will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will remain confidential except where a body conducting an inspection requests access to them, or where any other legal obligation prevails.