



## RIKKYO SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

### PARENTS' COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

In the event that a parent wishes to make a complaint about the School, whether on its treatment of a student or a general matter affecting the safety or welfare of a student or the students as a whole, the following procedure has been established by the School to comply with the legal requirements under which the School operates.

For any child protection issues, the School's Child Protection Policy procedures should be followed. The School lies within the County of West Sussex, and Child Protection is one of a number of responsibilities of the County's Social Services Department. They are the 'lead' agency and the first contact for the School if outside agencies have to be brought in to help. The contact details are: telephone 01403 229900 or email [mash@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:mash@westsussex.gov.uk). The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Mrs Tunbridge-Adams, telephone number 0330 2223339 should be contacted within 24 hours if an allegation of child abuse by staff is being reported to the Headmaster.

For any other complaints, the procedure to be followed is given as a series of progressive steps. These are:-

1. Initially, the parent wishing to make a complaint should approach a member of the School staff on an informal basis. This informal approach could be to the Class Teacher (or Deputy) of the student involved, another member of staff known to the parent, or direct to the Headmaster. The staff member approached must respond to the complaint within a maximum of seven days.
2. If no response is received within seven days, or the response does not satisfy the complaining parent, the parent should put his/her complaint in writing to the Headmaster, specifying the person with whom he/she has already discussed the problem and that, either no response has been received within the time limit, or the response is unsatisfactory.
3. The complaint is recorded in the School's Complaints Book and the Headmaster or his Deputy must acknowledge, within two days, receipt of the written complaint and that the complaint is being considered.
4. Within one week of sending the acknowledgement, the Headmaster or his Deputy must send a response by electronic mail or otherwise to the parent either inviting the parent to an interview to discuss the complaint within the following fourteen days or advising the decision on the complaint. If the latter, the parent has the right to request a personal interview if the decision is considered by the parent to be unsatisfactory; if the parent has not responded within seven days of receiving the written decision,

either expressing dissatisfaction with the decision or requesting a personal interview, the parent is deemed to be satisfied with the outcome.

5. If an interview is held, the parent may be accompanied by any person of their choice. The parent should advise the Headmaster (or Deputy if appropriate) no later than seven days prior to the interview of the name, relationship (if any) and status (professional and occupational) of the accompanying person. The School must ensure that the parent receives written confirmation of the School's decision within seven days of the interview.
6. If the parent does not receive written confirmation of the decision within the seven day period, or disagrees with the decision, he/she may request that the complaint be referred to the School's Complaints Panel. This request should be made in writing to the Headmaster and should specify all the main points of disagreement with the decision.
7. The Complaints Panel comprises three people: the Vicar for the time being of St Nicolas Church, Cranleigh, Surrey (Church of England), a senior member of the School staff nominated by the Headmaster and who has not been involved in the complaint, and the School's Independent Listener (a Japanese speaker). Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the Panel should be convened within fourteen days of the parent's formal request being received. Should the Vicar or the Independent Listener not be available, because of sickness or absence, the parent may agree to a substitute or await availability. If the latter the School will not be considered to have failed to convene the Panel within the stipulated time provided it acts with reasonable expedition. The parent will be given reasonable notice of the Panel Meeting and has the right to be accompanied on the same terms as for the interview described in para 5 above.
8. The Panel will issue a confidential written statement of their findings and recommendations (if any) within seven days of the conclusion of the Meeting with the parent, copies of which will be sent to the complaining parent, the Chairman of the Trustees, the Headmaster, any person who accompanied the parent to the Meeting and the staff member about whom the complaint had been made.
9. The confidential statement will be filed in the confidential section of the School's Complaints file, together with any relevant records, available for inspection on the School premises by the Headmaster. The papers will be destroyed twelve months after the Panel Meeting, or the date on which the student concerned leaves the School, whichever is the later.
10. On the issuance of the Panel's confidential statement this procedure is concluded.

(Note that a separate procedure has been established for students making their own complaints on an issue affecting them entitled "Students' Complaints Procedure").

In year 2017/18, there was no formal complaint from parents.

**Previous January 2016**

Reviewed 2017, October 2018