Shrewsbury School

PUPIL CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

If pupils have concerns, they are encouraged to speak to someone at the School and to express them. Shrewsbury School welcomes suggestions and comments from pupils and it takes seriously any complaints raised by pupils. Any complaint involving safeguarding concerns will be handled in accordance with the School's *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* and may be referred to external agencies.

This Concerns and Complaints Procedure explains how to express a concern or complaint and how concerns and complaints will be addressed.

We wish to ensure that:

- pupils wishing to make a complaint know how to do so;
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable timeframe and in a courteous and efficient way;
- pupils know that we will always listen and take complaints seriously;
- we take action where it is deemed appropriate to do so.

Defining key terms

A concern is understood to be an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.

A complaint is understood to be an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

Is something worrying you?

Here are some examples of the kinds of thing which can be worrying for young people:

- you are having difficulty with one or more of your school subjects
- you think you may be ill and are too afraid or embarrassed to tell anyone
- you feel very depressed, or that life is not worth living
- you or your friends are being bullied or treated unkindly by another pupil
- you think that another pupil is not eating properly, or may be harming him / herself
- you are worried, angry or hurt about something happening at home
- you think that another pupil has done, or is about to do, something seriously wrong or dangerous
- you are caught in a serious situation that you don't know how to get out of, for example to do with drugs, alcohol, money or sex
- you feel you are being treated unfairly simply because you are a girl or simply because you are a boy, or because of your colour or religion, or because you have a disability or learning difficulty, or because you may be lesbian or gay
- you feel that a member of staff has treated you unfairly e.g. in a punishment given, or in favouring other students
- you feel you are not given enough privacy.

If any of these things are happening, please talk to someone about it, even if you feel you can handle the situation. It may be that what's going on affects other people at school, or that you are unaware of all the different ways a problem can be tackled.

The information and procedures below may be useful.

Informal Procedure

This procedure offers a way for pupils to resolve concerns and complaints informally and, hopefully, quickly by discussing a concern or complaint with an appropriate person at school, usually a member of staff, and, through such discussion and any resultant outcome, being reassured that the matter has been, or is being, satisfactorily dealt with and need not be taken further.

In many instances a concern or complaint may be articulated during conversation with friends or others whom the complainant already trusts and with whom he or she is happy to discuss the complaint.

However, sometimes pupils may also need the help and support of an adult or professional. Pupils should choose whoever they feel most comfortable and safe talking to.

In the first instance, it is recommended that a pupil gets in touch with one or more of the following: their parents, their Housemaster/Housemistress, their personal tutor, any member of staff, a House Tutor, the House Matron, the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), the Chaplain, the Health Centre, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms A.R. Peak.

An Independent Adult is also available to talk to and pupils may contact them directly about any personal problems or concerns at school. The contact details of the current Independent Adult is:

Mrs Sarah Hankin sarahankin9@gmail.com 07764 450079

It may be that, through discussion with the individual they choose, matters can be resolved quickly, and informally and that the complainant feels that there is no need to take things further.

If, however, matters appear not to have been satisfactorily resolved through informal consultation, or if the issue is not suitable for informal resolution, it is appropriate to consider making a formal complaint, the procedure for which is explained below.

Formal Complaints Procedure

This procedure is designed to enable pupils formally to express a complaint in writing and to receive a formal response, within a reasonable and clear time scale, from the School.

If the pupil is dissatisfied with the results of the Informal Procedure, or feels that informal discussion is inappropriate to their situation, then they may hand a formal written complaint to their Housemaster/Housemistress, the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms A.R. Peak.

Such a complaint will receive a written reply within 48 hours of having been received within term-time explaining what is going to be done about the complaint. The pupil may be asked to speak to a senior member of staff about their complaint. They may be accompanied by a friend or another member of staff.

The Senior Deputy Head will be informed of all formal complaints from pupils.

Review Panel

If the pupil is dissatisfied with the outcome or the Senior Deputy Head deems it necessary, the complaint may be referred to the **Internal Review Panel** to hear the case. This Panel will consist of the Senior Deputy Head, one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads, the School Chaplain and a Governor. If the Review Panel asks to hear the case, the procedure for doing so, which will be clear and simple, will be explained carefully and supportively and the complainant will be welcome, at any stage, to be accompanied by a friend.

In the case of a formal written complaint having been referred to the Internal Review Panel, a response will be communicated by the Panel to the complainant within 5 working days within term time of the referral of the written complaint to the Panel.

If the pupil is not satisfied with the results of either of the above procedures, or if they feel that to approach a current member of staff or the Internal Review Panel would be inappropriate to his or her concern, then the School suggests he or she contacts the Independent Adult.

Mrs Sarah Hankin sarahankin9@gmail.com 07764 450079
Alternatively they may contact Child Line on 0800 1111.

The Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service can be contacted free of charge on 0800 528 0731 or by email at help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
Further information, including frequently asked questions, can be found at: https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand

The Senior Deputy Head will keep a record of serious complaints from pupils and what happened to those complaints and will review them from time to time.

Parent Complaints Procedure

If a pupil does not feel that the School has dealt with their complaint, they she should involve their parents who may wish to make a complaint under the School's Parent Complaints Procedure.

Owner: ARP – Deputy Head Pastoral
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