



## Friends' School Saffron Walden

### **What can I do if I have a complaint? A pupils' guide.**

Friends' School welcomes suggestions and comments from pupils and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. The Complaints Procedure is available on the pupil's sections of the website and in Boarding Houses.

We wish to ensure that:

- Pupils 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
- Pupils realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- We take action where appropriate
- Pupils are not penalised when a complaint is made in good faith

#### **“How should I complain?”**

If you have a complaint we hope that you will speak to your form teacher, house parents, Head of Year or other member of staff. You can also raise complaints at Food Committee, Boarding Committee and School Council.

- For example, you may have a complaint about breakfast; you should take this to Food Committee through your form representative.
- If you have a complaint about the facilities available within the boarding house you could take this to your House parent or Boarding Committee. They may refer some matters to Health and Safety Committee.
- A complaint about another pupil can be taken to your form teacher, or any other member of staff.
- If you have a complaint about a medical issue this can be taken to a member of House staff, your form teacher, or any other teacher.
- If you have a complaint about a member of staff this could go to an Assistant Head, or any other teacher who will help you take the complaint to a more senior member of staff.

If you are not happy that your complaint has been acted upon, you can go to a more senior member of staff, or the Head. You may wish to raise an issue at School Council or at a meeting of the Boarding Committee.

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

Staff are here to support and help you. Any of the members of staff listed above will listen and help you to decide what to do.

## **“I feel uncomfortable talking to some one at school.”**

You may choose to contact one of the following.

- i) Our school doctors Dr Clive Paul and Dr Cathy Cowley will investigate such complaints and can be contacted at The Rectory Practice, Saffron Walden. Tel. 01799 522327 or when they take a school surgery on a Wednesday 2.00 - 3.00pm.
- ii) The Independent Listener, Gill Lindsell can be contacted directly by email [gilllindsell@friends.org.uk](mailto:gilllindsell@friends.org.uk) or via the medical centre
- ii) You may wish to contact the Social Services Department Tel. 0845 603 7627. This is most likely to be appropriate in the case of suspected child abuse. You can also contact the Independent Schools Inspectorate, see their website: [www.isi.net/contact](http://www.isi.net/contact) or telephone 020 7600 0100

## **“What happens next?”**

**Any complaints made, whether formal or informal, will be followed up.** They will make a written record of what you tell them and ask you to check that you agree with their understanding of your complaint.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, or if one of the named persons above judges the complaint is of such a serious nature that it must be dealt with through the formal procedure, a written report of the complaint must be made. One of the named persons will help you to complete a complaints form. They would then contact the Head and oversee subsequent investigations. You will be given a response within 3 days.

You are welcome to take a friend for support when going to see one of the people named above.

## **“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 Head and those directly involved. The Clerk of Governors may also need to be informed.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer the matters to the police. We will speak to you and make sure you know who will be informed if this happens.

## **“What happens if I am not happy with the school’s response?”**

We hope that we will be able to satisfy your concerns. If we do not, you may wish to seek advice from Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills): see their website at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/footer/How-to-complain>. You can also contact the Children’s Rights Director through the website at [www.rights4me.org](http://www.rights4me.org)

**The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain.**

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