



OUNDLE

School



Laxton
Junior School

OUNDLE

Complaints Policy

The Corporation of Oundle School includes both Oundle School, a boarding and day School for pupils aged 11 – 18 and Laxton Junior School (LJS), a day School for pupils aged 4 - 11. This policy applies equally to both Schools and any reference to 'the School' relates to both Oundle and LJS.

This policy links to the School's Terms and Conditions (available on request from the Head of Oundle School or the Head of Laxton Junior School, as appropriate).

A1. This document sets out the School's official Complaints Policy and constitutes the School's Complaints Procedure, available to the parents of current, registered pupils, or former parents who initially raised a complaint while their child was still registered. It does not otherwise cover former parents, or prospective parents. Appeals against exclusions are provided separately.

A2. The School undertakes to make this document (Complaints Policy) available on request to the Head's PA and on the School website to current parents.

A3. A Complaints File is held by the Head, containing a written record of all Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints, and whether they are resolved at Stage 2 or proceed to a panel hearing. Complaints relating to EYFS or boarding provision are recorded as such, together with actions taken, regardless of whether the complaint is upheld, or if the complaint was withdrawn. A record is made of any recommendations and actions taken for Stage 2 or Stage 3 complaints as appropriate.

A4. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

A5. The School undertakes to comply with all National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, EYFS and ISI Regulations.

A6. Three stages of complaint are recognised. In each case the School will aim to respond to and deal with the complaint within the timescale given but under certain circumstances (*eg* holidays, staff absence, the need for further investigation, the availability of panel members) it may take longer than shown.

Stage 1 – Informal

In the first instance, the complaint should be made on an informal basis. For LJS this is to the Form Tutor or relevant member of staff. For Oundle School, this is to the relevant Housemaster, Housemistress, Deputy Head or Head of the relevant Department. The School will endeavour to reach resolution within seven days of the complaint being made.

If the complaint is against the Head, it should be made directly to the Chairman of the Governing Body.

Stage 2 – Formal

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with Stage 1, the complaint should be lodged in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Head will meet or speak to the complainant, normally within seven days, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be made at this stage.

It may be necessary to carry out further investigations. These will be undertaken as quickly as possible, and the parents will be informed of the likely timescale. The Head will keep records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the relevant facts are established, a decision will be made, and the complainant informed in writing. The Head will give reasons for her decision.

If the complaint is against the Head, the Chairman of Governors will establish all relevant facts and will in most cases speak to or meet with the complainant to discuss the matter. The Chairman will consider the evidence and inform the complainant of his decision and the reasons behind it.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Where complainants are not satisfied with the response to the complaint in accordance with Stage 2, the complaint should be lodged in writing with the Secretary to the Governing Body – chairman@oundleschool.org.uk. The Secretary will convey the complaint to the Chairman of Governors, who will appoint a Panel of at least three persons to hear the complaint. This will be a full merits hearing, not merely a check that process was followed. The panel will include one member who is independent of the management and running of the School. None of the Panel will have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

A parent may attend the panel hearing and be accompanied if they wish. Reasonable efforts will be made to facilitate the parents' exercising the right of to attend. If a parent does not exercise the right to attend, this does not remove the School's obligation to hold the hearing in conformity with this policy.

The Secretary, on behalf of the Panel, will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 21 days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require further particulars of the complaint or related matter to be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars should be supplied to all parties normally no less than 5 days prior to the hearing.

A7. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Panel will retire to consider its decision. Unless it believes it necessary to consider further evidence, it will give its decision on the day of the hearing or as soon as possible thereafter. If the panel is unable to come to decision pending further evidence, it will set a date for a further hearing, or for the delivery of the decision and the reasons for it by post and/or email.

A8. The panel will deliver its findings, recommendations and stipulations, and subsequently within seven days will record those findings, recommendations and stipulations in writing, with copies to the complainant, the Chairman of Governors, the Head and where relevant the person complained about. A

copy of the findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Head.

A9. The School aims to resolve complaints to the complainant's satisfaction. Where this is not possible the outcome will balance the rights and needs of all pupils.

A10. Pupils and Parents will not be penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

A11. Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this may be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of the policy.

A12. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure (at Stage 3) is made available to parents on request.

A13. Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints are reported by the Head of Oundle School to each meeting of the Governing Body, and by the Head of LJS to each meeting of the LJS sub-committee of the Governing Body. This includes a discussion of any underlying trends.

EYFS only:

A14. Written complaints about the fulfilling of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome within 28 days. The record of complaints is made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

A15. Parents of EYFS children should follow the three stages of this Complaints Procedure. If parents remain dissatisfied and their complaint is about the School's fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, then parents may take their complaint to the ISI or Ofsted. Parents will be notified by ISI or Ofsted of the outcome of the investigation into their complaint within 28 days of the complaint being received.

A16. Parents may complain directly to Ofsted or to ISI if they believe the provider is not meeting the EYFS requirements:

Ofsted can be contacted on 0300 123 1231 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

ISI can be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: concerns@isi.net

ISI, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

Reviewer – Oundle	SKD
Reviewer – LJS	LYW
Post of Reviewer (s)	Head
Review Date	Michaelmas 2023
Reviewed and filed with both Schools	Michaelmas 2023
Next Review (max 3 yrs)	Michaelmas 2024