



THE JOHN WARNER SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY (STAGE 1)

DATE CREATED: SEPTEMBER 2020

THE JOHN WARNER SCHOOL
STANSTEAD ROAD, HODDESDON, EN11 0QF



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Complaints Policy (Stage 1)

2020-21

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Vision and Values

*At The John Warner School we **ignite** a lifelong passion for learning, to **discover** and develop potential, allowing all to **flourish** in an ever-changing world.*

Our values reflect what we believe in as an educational institution and the behaviours we expect to see demonstrated by all those associated with the school:

Aspiration Endeavour Creativity Participation Respect

Aims

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of pupils at the school, and others.

The school Complaints Policy (Stage 1) should be read in conjunction with The Hoddesdon School Trust Complaints Policy <https://hoddesdonschooltrust.com/329/thst-policies>

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- Be impartial and non-adversarial
- Facilitate a full and fair investigation by an independent person or panel, where necessary
- Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response
- Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality
- Treat complainants with respect and courtesy
- Ensure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law
- Keep complainants informed of the progress of the complaints process
- Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed (see The Hoddesdon School Trust Complaints Policy).

The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full.

To support this, we will ensure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

Legislation and statutory requirements

This document meets the requirements set out in part 7 of the schedule to [the Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which states that we must have and make available a written procedure to deal with complaints from parents of pupils at the school.

It is also based on guidance published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on [creating a complaints procedure that complies with the above regulations](#), and refers to [good practice guidance on setting up complaints procedures](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Definitions and Scope

Definitions

The DfE guidance explains the difference between a concern and a complaint:

- A concern is defined as “an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought”. The school will resolve concerns through day-to-day communication as far as possible
- A complaint is defined as “an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action”

We also distinguish between informal and formal complaints. We will always try to resolve concerns or complaints in the informal stage.

- Informal stage – covered by this school policy. The informal stage is Stage 1 of the Trust’s complaints policy (see above).
- Formal stage – covered by the complaints policy of The Hoddesdon School Trust (see above. The formal stage is Stage 2 (complaint addressed to the headteacher), Stage 3 (complaint addressed to the Local Governing Body) and Stage 4 (complaint addressed to a Panel of the Academy Trust).

Scope

The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage.

There may be occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. This policy outlines the procedure relating to handling such complaints.

This policy does not cover complaints procedures relating to:

- Admissions
- Statutory assessments of special educational needs (SEN)
- Safeguarding matters
- Exclusion
- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Please see our separate policies for procedures relating to these types of complaint.

Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) about the school's support are within the scope of this policy. Such complaints should first be made to the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO); they will then be referred to this complaints policy. Our SEN policy and information report includes information about the rights of parents of pupils with disabilities who believe that our school has discriminated against their child.

Complaints about services provided by other providers who use school premises or facilities should be directed to the provider concerned.

Roles and responsibilities

Local governing body (LGB)

The LGB is responsible for monitoring this policy's effectiveness and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for reviewing and approving this policy.

The complainant

The complainant will get a more effective and timely response to their complaint if they:

- Follow these procedures
- Co-operate with the school throughout the process, and respond to deadlines and communication promptly
- Treat all those involved with respect
- Not publish details about the complaint on social media

The investigator

An individual will be appointed to look into the complaint, and establish the facts. They will:

- Interview all relevant parties, keeping notes
- Consider records and any written evidence and keep these securely
- Prepare a comprehensive report to the headteacher which includes the facts and potential solutions

How to Complain

We anticipate that parents/carers may have one or more sources of complaint. Complaints may relate to a specific subject or to a matter of pastoral care. It is also possible that parents/carers may wish to make a complaint about a member of staff in particular.

If you wish to make a complaint please contact main school reception between 08:30 and 16:30 (01992 462889), leaving your child's name and tutor group and stating the nature of the complaint. A member of staff will return your call within 24 hours or the first working day after the call.

If you wish to complain in writing, your complaint should be addressed to the member of staff for the stage you are at on the school's complaints procedure, and either posted or emailed to admin@johnwarner.herts.sch.uk.

Written complaints will be acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt.

You are welcome to come into school at any time, but in order to ensure that a teacher or senior member of staff is free, please make an appointment.

Making a complaint about a specific subject

The following procedure should be adopted if you wish to make a complaint about a specific subject, examples of which may be their homework or the teaching group that they are in for that subject.

Step 1: You will be referred by the school's office to your child's subject teacher. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 2: You will be referred by the school's office to the subject's Head of Faculty. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 3: Please make an appointment with the relevant Senior Leadership Team Quality Partner as set out in the Staff Structure (Faculty) box below. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 4: Please make an appointment with one of the Deputy Headteachers. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 5: Please refer to Stage 2 of The Hoddesdon School Trust Complaints Policy which contains relevant information about making a complaint to the headteacher.

Staff Faculty Structure

Faculty	Head of Faculty	SLT Quality Partner
Art, Engineering, Design and Technology	Mr Stuart Higham	Ms Lauren Thomas
English, Music and Drama	Mr James Fitzgerald	Miss Tara Haddock

Humanities	Miss Alex Barnes (Acting)	Mrs Grace Yesufu
Professional Studies	Mr Matthew Walker	Mr Stephen Cove
Mathematics	Mr Moncef Fakhfakh	Mr Nigel Cook
Modern Foreign Languages	Mrs Katja Andrews	Mr James Fitzgerald
Physical Education	Miss Tara Haddock	Mrs Clare Price
Science	Miss Gemma Major	Mrs Jennifer Pope

Making a complaint about a pastoral problem

The following procedure should be adopted if you wish to make a complaint about a pastoral problem relating to your child, examples of which may include bullying, absence or problems outside of school.

Step 1: You will be referred by the school's office to your child's form tutor. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 2: You will be referred by the school's office to your child's Head of Year. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 3: Please make an appointment with your child's Director of Learning. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage (for Year 12 or Year 13 please skip to Stage 4).

Step 4: Please make an appointment with the relevant Assistant Headteacher. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 4: Please make an appointment with one of the Deputy Headteachers. If the matter remains unresolved, please move to the next stage.

Step 5: Please refer to Stage 2 of The Hoddesdon School Trust Complaints Policy which contains relevant information about making a complaint to the headteacher.

Staff Pastoral Structure

Year	Head of Year	Director of Learning	Assistant Headteacher
7	Mrs Jude Stephenson	Mrs Angharad Maughan	Mrs Jennifer Pope
8	Mr Kelvin Omonfomah		
9	Mrs Claudia Wotton		
10	Mr James Fox	Mrs Jennifer Walters	Ms Lauren Thomas
11	Miss Michelle Jaggs		

12	Mr James Collingwood	N/A	Mr Stephen Cove
13	Miss Sarah Crummy		

Moving to the Formal Stage

The procedure for resolving complaints informally (Stage 1) is set out above. Generally, it is expected that all reasonable efforts will be made to resolve the complaint at Stage 1 before a request is made to deal with it under the Trust's formal complaints policy.

The Hoddesdon School Trust Complaints Policy <https://hoddesdonschooltrust.com/329/thst-policies> gives details on how to raise a formal complaint.