



## **Westminster Tutors**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

With the introduction of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2003 (which came into force on 1 September 2003), independent schools are required by law to adopt, make available and apply a complaints procedure in order to comply with the new standards against which Ofsted inspections will be carried out. The Westminster Tutors Complaints Procedure is as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Informal Resolution**

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's personal tutor. In many cases the matter will be resolved by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the personal tutor cannot resolve this matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a subject teacher, a member of the administrative staff or the Principal.
- Complaints made directly to the Principal or the College Secretary will usually be referred to the relevant personal tutor or subject teacher unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
- If the Principal is the personal tutor for the student, and the parents would prefer to deal with an alternative member of staff, they should contact either the Vice Principal or the Senior Tutor as these members of staff also act as personal tutors.
- The personal tutor to whom the complaint has been made will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within two weeks, or in the events that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

#### **Stage 2: Formal Resolution**

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- If the Principal needs to meet or speak to the parents concerned to discuss the matter, she will do so as soon as possible, but not later than ten days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations.
- The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

- Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Principal will also give a reason for her decision.
- If parents are still not satisfied they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

**Stage 3: Panel Hearings**

- If parents need to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Proprietor who will appoint a Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the College. The Panel will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing which will take place as soon as possible and normally within ten days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any other related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three days prior to the hearing.
- The parents are permitted to attend the Complaints Panel hearing and may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parent’s complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts that they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within ten days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel’s findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Principal, the Proprietor, and where relevant, the person complained of.

**Written Records and Confidentiality**

- Written records will be kept of all formal complaints, and will indicate whether complaints were resolved at the preliminary formal resolution stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing. A summary of the number of formal complaints received during the previous academic year is made available to parents and other relevant parties on request, along with any action taken as a result of a formal complaint.
- Parents can be assured that all complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in for far as is required of the school by paragraph 6 (2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school’s inspection; or when any other legal obligation prevails.

Number of Complaints Received in Academic Year 2015-16	none	Action taken:	N/A
Number of Complaints Received in Academic Year 2016-17:	none	Action taken:	N/A
Number of Complaints Received in Academic Year 2017-18	none	Action taken:	N/A
Number of Complaints Received in Academic Year 2018-19:	none	Action taken:	N/A