



Durham School

Pupil Complaint Policy

1 Policy Aim

- 1.1 The School takes the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils very seriously. If you as a pupil have a complaint about something that has happened in school you can expect to be treated in accordance with this policy.
- 1.2 The School will make the procedure for making complaints available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the School's website and in the School Office during the day, and the School will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available, and the form in which it is published or available.
- 1.3 The School commits in this policy to observing the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate on any grounds.

2 Policy Statement

Despite everyone's best intentions, life has its ups and downs; for those times when life is difficult, there are a number of ways in which help may be sought. Even when you are aware of how you might receive help, it is quite another matter to make the decision to do so. We hope that you will make the decision to find help so that your concerns or difficulties can be resolved or minimised.

3 Procedure

There are many different reasons why you, as a pupil, might feel upset or disappointed for example, you may not feel able to manage alone in the following situations:

- there are pressures or difficulties at or from home;
- you feel you are unable to cope owing to problems with work or for social reasons (e.g. pressure or difficulties with friendships);
- you or your friends are being bullied; possibly unfriendly or incessant teasing, being physically pushed around or being excluded;
- you receive upsetting e-mails or text messages, or discover that rumours are being spread about you in person or online through social media;
- you feel low, depressed or ill;
- you feel that another pupil is not eating properly or may be harming her/himself;
- someone has hurt your feelings or made suggestions you think are not right;
- you feel that there are intrusions into your space or privacy;
- you think you are being unfairly treated;
- you feel you have been treated unreasonably by a member of staff;

Everyone has worries, problems and difficulties from time to time, which may be major or minor and which may affect either an individual or a group. They almost certainly cause anxiety. At Durham School, matters can usually be resolved if you talk openly to the right person. You may or may not be able to

sense who is the right person, but you should go to someone with whom you feel comfortable. You may wish to telephone home but in the first instance it may be better to talk to a friend or seek out one of your teachers, your Tutor, Matron or Housemaster/-mistress. They will always be prepared to listen. On the other hand you may wish to speak directly to the a Deputy Head, a Medical Centre Nurse, the Chaplain or the Headmaster.

Some new problems are best dealt with by individual contact with one person, but others may need to be dealt with by several people. It is important to emphasise that you may choose the people with whom you would like to speak.

Your choice may depend on the circumstances and your feelings at the time and you do not have to tell anyone else what you are doing. Some useful details are below:

Housemasters/-mistresses

The Caffinites

e-mail:

Mr C. Fordyce

c.fordyce@durhamschool.co.uk

MacLeod

e-mail:

Mrs N. Thompson

n.thompson@durhamschool.co.uk

Pimlico

e-mail:

Mrs K. Rochester

k.rochester@durhamschool.co.uk

Poole House

e-mail:

Mr D. Reith

d.reith@durhamschool.co.uk

The School House

e-mail:

Mr M Younger

m.younger@durhamschool.co.uk

The Deputy Head (Pastoral)

e-mail:

Dr J. Burns

j.burns@durhamschool.co.uk

The Deputy Head (Academic)

e-mail:

Mr A. Pearson

a.pearson@durhamschool.co.uk

The Chaplain

e-mail:

Rev'd Simon McMurtary

s.mcmurtary@durhamschool.co.uk

The School Medical Centre

e-mail:

Mrs Dutton

a.dutton@durhamschool.co.uk

e-mail:

Mrs Abbott

p.abbott@durhamschool.co.uk

NHS Durham Urgent Care Service

Tel.: 111

Childline

Freepost 1111
London, N1 0BR
0800 1111

Tel.:

Rights4me (Office of the Children's Rights Director)

Tel.: 0300 123 1231

Tel.: 0800 528 0731

Website: www.rights4me.org

The important thing is to speak to a trusted and responsible adult if you are worried or upset.

4 Support if you are in trouble

It is important for you to bear in mind that, if you are in trouble over some matter, you may have your friend, House Tutor or member of staff with you when you are talking with your Housemaster, the Deputy Heads or the Head Master.

5 Complaints

Sometimes you may feel that you would like to complain about something that is worrying you. The first thing you should do is speak to any member of staff (eg your Housemaster or Tutor). If you wish, you can take a friend, another pupil, an older pupil or a member of staff with you. If the matter is not settled to your reasonable satisfaction then you can make a formal complaint.

6 Making a formal complaint

- a. Write to your Housemaster or the Deputy Head (pastoral) and say that you wish to make a formal complaint.
- b. Your complaint will then be registered in a Complaints File held by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- c. You will receive a reply from the Deputy Head (Pastoral) saying that your complaint has been seen and that it is being attended to within two School days of your making the complaint.
- d. You will then be asked to talk the matter through with the Deputy Head (Pastoral). You may invite a friend, a pupil or member of staff, of your choice to come to this meeting with you. You will then receive a written answer explaining what the Deputy Head (Pastoral) has decided to do about the complaint.
- e. If at any stage you are dissatisfied with this procedure you may want to contact Mrs Frances Proud, the School's Independent Listener, to whom you can speak at the School. Mrs Proud can be contacted via email at f.proud48@btinternet.com.
- f. Your parents can also use the School's formal complaints procedure which is available on the School's website <https://www.durhamschool.co.uk/downloads/complaints-procedure-parents-policy-12112018.pdf>
- g. You do not have to inform an individual or anyone else that you are making a complaint.

7 Confidentiality

The School understands that you may wish to talk about a problem only if it is kept secret. In many cases this is possible, but there are two exceptions you should be aware of:

- 6.1 The School may not offer any absolute grant of confidentiality; in any instances where a safeguarding risk may exist, the School has a legal responsibility to report these to the appropriate authority.
- 6.2 The School has a legal duty to keep your parents/guardians informed about your welfare and progress at School. However, if you do not wish them to be informed, please say so, so that the options can be discussed with you.
- 6.3 However, please do not let this stop you from raising complaints or saying when you are worried or upset. Most pupils, who find the courage to speak up, subsequently say that they were helped and relieved and that the problem was eased by talking it through with someone experienced and helpful.

8 Links to other policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Complaints Procedure (Parents) Policy
- Independent Listener Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

9 Oversight

This policy is overseen by Audit Committee of the Governing Body and is reviewed at least once in every three year period.

Policy written and reviewed by

Jennifer M Burns, Deputy Head [Pastoral]

17/11/2014

01/09/2015

01/03/2019