



Durham School

Pupil Complaint Policy

1. Policy Aim

- 1.1 The School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. If pupils do have a complaint, however, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this policy.
- 1.2 The School will make the complaints procedure 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 problems and situations which may upset you. For example, you may not be 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 via the intranet or internet.
- 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, abused you 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 Chaplain, the San Nurses, the Deputy Heads, or the Head Master.

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 contact telephone numbers are:

Housemasters/-mistresses

The Caffinites

Tel.:
e-mail:

Mr C. Fordyce

0191 3753825
c.fordyce@durhamschool.co.uk

Macleod

Tel.:
e-mail:

Mrs N. Thompson

0191 3753270
n.thompson@durhamschool.co.uk

Pimlico

Tel.:
e-mail:

Mrs K. Rochester

0191 3753276
k.rochester@durhamschool.co.uk

Poole House

Tel.:
e-mail:

Mr D. Reith

0191 3753284
d.reith@durhamschool.co.uk

The School House

Tel.:
e-mail:

Dr M. Alderson

0191 375 32 95
m.alderon@durhamschool.co.uk

The Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Tel.:
e-mail:

Dr J. Burns

0191 3753274
j.burns@durhamschool.co.uk

Senior Master

Tel.:
e-mail:

Dr M. Alderson

0191 375 32 95
m.alderon@durhamschool.co.uk

The Chaplain

Tel.:
e-mail:

Rev'd Simon McMurtary

0191 3751482
s.mcmurtary@durhamschool.co.uk

The School Sanatorium:

Tel.:

e-mail:

Mrs Dutton

0191 3753293

a.dutton@durhamschool.co.uk

Tel.:

e-mail:

Mrs Abbott

0191 3753293

p.abbott@durhamschool.co.uk**NHS Durham Urgent Care Service**

Tel.:

111

Childline

Freepost 1111

London, N1 0BR

Tel.:

0800 1111

Durham Social Care Direct

Tel.:

0845 8505010

Ofsted

0300 123 1231

Rights4me (Office of the Children's Rights Director)

Tel.:

0300 123 1231

Tel.:

0800 528 0731

Website:

www.rights4me.org

DO NOT WAIT; SPEAK TO SOMEONE WHO CARES

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.

5.1 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 get a note from the Deputy Head 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 either 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, you can again have a friend with you. Mrs Proud can be contacted email at f.proud48@btinternet.com .Mrs Proud will treat all contact with her made in these ways confidentially.
- f. Your parents can also use the School's formal complaints procedure which is available on the School's website.
- g. You do not have to inform an individual or anyone else that you are making a complaint.

6. 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.

7. Links to other policies and documents

This policy is linked to the following:

- Independent Listener Policy

8. 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

1/9/15