

Concerns and Complaints Policy (School Curriculum and Related Matters)

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Procedure Owner:	Headteacher
Governing Body Responsibility:	Standards Committee
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This policy to be reviewed on or before January 2024



Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School

Contents

Introduction	3
Underlying Principles.....	3
If You Have a Concern or Complaint	3
Stage 1.....	4
Stage 2.....	4
Stage 3.....	4
Stage 4.....	5
Some Notes	5
Configuration History.....	6

Introduction

For this document a 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A 'complaint' may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

Academies complaints procedures are required to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 and we have to make these procedures available to parents of students and parents of prospective students. This policy is available via the school's website.

Here at KGGS we strive to deliver the best possible education to all our students and care for their health, safety and welfare at all times.

All staff at KGGS, teaching and non-teaching are dedicated to achieving this aim. From time to time, however, it is possible that you may feel we have not lived up to your expectations.

If you have any worry or concern about what is happening at school, **Please get in touch with us about it.** It is far better that we deal with a concern before it becomes a complaint.

We are committed to working closely with parents and believe that the school and parents should work in partnership, each meeting and maintaining their own responsibilities ensuring that students gain the most from their time at school.

This general school complaints policy does not cover every type of complaint. The issues noted below have their own separate procedures.

- Content of an Educational Health Care Plan
- Child Protection Issues
- Safeguarding concerns about staff that need to be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Issues relating to responsibilities of the Local Authority such as Admissions or Home to School Transport. *FOIA requests*

Underlying Principles

- Complaints will be considered and resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible
- Complaints will be dealt with by the member of staff best suited to deal with the matter
- If the complaint is about an individual member of staff they have the right to know the substance and source of any allegation made against them

If You Have a Concern or Complaint

Here is a summary of what to do if you have a concern about something at school

- In the first instance, please discuss your concern with the student's subject teacher or form tutor (Stage 1)
- If, after doing this, you do not feel that your concern has been fully addressed, then contact the Head of Year or Head of Faculty for that subject. Members of the Senior Leadership Team are also available to deal with concerns. To help with this there is

a full list of teaching staff together with their responsibilities on the school's website. (still Stage 1)

- If, after doing this, you still do not feel that your concern has been properly addressed, or if your concern is about a particular teacher, please either write to the Headteacher, or contact the Headteacher's PA and arrange to discuss the matter either on the phone or in person. The written complaint is then at Stage 2
- If, after doing this, you remain dissatisfied; you have the option to write to the Chair of Governors of the School, addressed to KGGS. (Stage 3)
- If you are still not satisfied you can request an appeal hearing (Stage 4)

More detailed information about the steps to follow is given below:

Stage 1

If you are unhappy with any aspect of school life, please talk to the subject teacher or tutor. They will make every effort to make time to discuss your concerns as soon as possible. We will aim to acknowledge receipt of a concern or complaint within two days, whenever possible. However, to make sure that the teacher/tutor has time to listen properly to what you have to say, it may be worth asking the teacher/tutor for a time which is mutually convenient, so that you can speak to them directly by phone if necessary. Please telephone the school reception to make an appointment (01476 563017).

Please remember that staff may be teaching for most of the school day, and so may not be available to look into the detail of your concern, or to communicate directly with you on that day.

Very occasionally, it may be that, the teacher/tutor cannot resolve your concern, or you feel that the situation has not been resolved. If this is the case, you should raise the issue with the Head of Year or if it is a subject / curriculum matter, the appropriate Head of Faculty.

Again, it is often helpful to telephone the school to make an appointment, to enable staff to set aside the time to listen and talk through the situation carefully with you either in person or on the telephone.

Stage 2

We would expect most, if not all, concerns and complaints to have been resolved through the steps described above. In exceptional circumstances, however, this may not be the case and you may wish to pursue the matter further and more formally. Such complaints should be clearly set out and submitted in writing to the Headteacher's PA, ideally within 10 school days of the informal meeting/discussion in stage 1. The Headteacher will aim to respond to the complaint letter either by letter or email within 10 school days.

Concerns relating to the internal management and organisation of the school, discipline within the school and other such matters would normally be raised, firstly, with the Headteacher and then, only if unresolved, the Governing Body. Although complaints to the Chair of Governors happen rarely, Governors are keen to ensure that you follow carefully and abide by the advice and procedures in stages 3 and 4.

Stage 3

If you feel that the above steps have not resolved your concerns or complaint, you should set out your concerns in writing and address it "For the Attention of The Chair of Governors", at the school address. The Clerk to Governors can provide you with a complaints form if you would rather complete this than produce a letter of complaint.

On receipt of your written complaint, the Chair of Governors will respond to your complaint in writing, within 10 school days. If you are still unhappy with this decision, you are entitled to

request a hearing where you can discuss your complaint in more detail. In this instance the Chair of Governors will convene a Governing Body Appeals Panel. (Stage 4)

Stage 4

The Appeals panel will comprise of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom must be independent of the management and running of the school. Every effort will be made to ensure you are comfortable at such a meeting, making the discussion as relaxed as possible. A complainant should submit a request for such a panel hearing within 10 school days of the Chair of Governors response. The Chair will aim to convene the panel meeting within 15 school days of the request. The complainant will be invited to attend the panel hearing.

Having heard your views and taken any appropriate advice, the Governors panel will respond to your complaint, in writing, giving the reasons for their decision, together with information about what you can do if you remain dissatisfied. Wherever possible, the written response from Governors should be sent to you within 10 school days of the panel hearing.

Some Notes

The school will keep a written record of all formal complaints and their outcomes.

This record will be maintained and held by the Headteacher's PA, who acts as the school's complaints co-ordinator.

Any complaint should be made within 30 working days of the incident or issue.

Any disciplinary outcome of any investigation into the conduct of a member of staff at the school is a confidential matter between the member of staff and the governors of the school and as such will not be disclosed to the complainant.

If a complainant tries to reopen an issue that has already been dealt with, the Chair of the Governing Body will write to the complainant explaining that the procedures have been followed and exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

Complaints about the Headteacher should be dealt with by the Chair of Governors.

Complaints against any individual governor should be made in writing to the clerk of the governing body who will direct it to the governors.

In line with the guidance produced by the ESFA on how it deals with complaints about academies – Kesteven and Grantham Girls School, when appropriate, may choose to handle complaints from those who are not parents of pupils at the academy differently. If this is the case, then the process to be used to resolve any such complaint will be explained clearly before proceeding.

If you believe that the governors have not followed agreed school policies or procedures properly, or at all, then you should contact the Education Funding Authority.

Generally, the ESFA can only look at complaints about academies that fall into the following two areas.

(i) The academy did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering a complaint or the academy's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements

(ii) The academy has failed to comply with a duty imposed on it under its funding agreement with the Secretary of State.

For further advice and guidance about the school's Complaints Procedure please contact the Headteacher's PA, since addresses and web-links are prone to change.

Configuration History

Version:	Date:	Authors	Contributors
1.0	January 2012	K Billington/LCC	
2.0	October 2012	Ian Todd	
3.0	January 2016	Mr D Scott	
4.0	January 2018	Mr D Scott	
4.1	January 2020	Mr J Fuller	
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Audit trail of change

Version:	Date	Reason for change
1.0	January 2012	New Policy
2.0	January 2013	Change from maintained status to Academy status from August 2012
3.0	January 2016	Policy Review - Response to EFA Advice
4.0	January 2018	Policy Review
4.1	January 2020	Policy Review
4.2	March 2021	Addition in Relation to FOIA Requests
4.3	January 2022	Policy review

Authorisation

Name	Date	Signature
Miss J Green	March 2022	