



Complaints Policy

Written 09/17

Approved 11/17

Bethan Millington

Review 07/19

1. Statement of Purpose

1.1 Redhill High School is committed to dealing fairly with complaints from its stakeholders.

1.2 This Complaints Policy supports our commitment to respond in a timely manner to stakeholder complaints and endeavour to ensure a professional, impartial and honest outcome on all reported issues.

1.3 The procedure also affords the School the opportunity to identify concerns and weaknesses to support our commitment to a climate of continuous quality improvement.

1.4 The School believes that school staff and directors have the right to be listened to and respected, as other stakeholders are. Therefore we expect complaints to be polite and courteous, and will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour towards the school and its staff. We will also not tolerate unreasonable demands, unreasonable persistence or vexatious complaining.

2. Scope

2.1 Our definition of a complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the school or a member of its staff that requires a response from the school.' The scope of the Complaints Procedure will also include complaints relating to all discrimination including race, disability, age and sexual orientation.

In this context, a stakeholder may be a student, a parent, a member of the public or a member of staff.

2.2 The procedure does not cover the following for which separate procedures exist:

- Appeals by students against decisions made by Examination Boards;
- Complaints involving misconduct by a pupil.

2.3 The following will be included in this procedure; however, in some cases they will invoke procedures covered by other identified policies:

- Complaints involving allegations of misconduct by a member of staff (Staff Disciplinary Procedure, Safeguarding Policy);
- Complaints by a member of staff against another member of staff (Staff Grievance Procedure).

2.4 The School will endeavour to provide an overall response to all complaints within three weeks. However, it is understood that the nature and context of the complaint will have a significant effect on the time period involved, and may indeed cause it to be longer or shorter than three weeks as appropriate.

3. Informal Complaints

3.1 An **informal** complaint is defined as a **verbal** complaint.

3.2 Where possible, complainants are requested to talk directly to the School about their concerns to see if an informal resolution can be achieved promptly and directly through discussion.

3.3 If this is not possible, or if the complaint has not been resolved informally, the issue should be raised as a formal complaint. In such cases this can be raised via the procedure outlined below.

4. Formal Complaints

4.1 A **formal** complaint is one that comes in as a written complaint.

4.2 Making a Complaint

- A complainant wishing to make a formal complaint within this procedure should submit details to the Headmaster in the following ways:
 - in writing, by letter or by email;
 - in writing, using the Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions Form (available on the School website or Reception area; also Appendix 1).

4.3 Response to the Initial Complaint

The School will log details of the complaint and send an acknowledgement to the complainant within five working days.

4.4 Responsibility

The Headmaster will ensure that the complaint is referred to the relevant person to investigate the complaint. This will normally be the appropriate senior member of staff. In the event of a complaint being made against the Headmaster or a Director, then this should be addressed directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors, who will decide the best way to respond to the complaint.

4.5 Time Frame / Process

- Three weeks following referral of the formal complaint to the appropriate senior member of staff, a response to the complaint will be sent. If no further correspondence is received from the complainant within three weeks, the matter will be deemed as closed;
- If the complaint cannot be resolved in three weeks by the appropriate senior member of staff, the matter will be referred to the Headmaster, who will assume responsibility for resolving the dispute, either directly or by delegating the matter to an alternative senior member of staff;
- The Headmaster will be informed of the outcome of the further investigation and then respond directly to the complainant. If no further correspondence is received from the complainant within three weeks, the matter is deemed as closed;
- In the event of the parents not being satisfied with the Headmaster's response to a written complaint, the matter would be referred to the Board of Directors. They will establish a hearing before a panel appointed by the Board of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the School. Parents may attend this hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied. Parents should notify the School in advance if they wish to be accompanied, and also indicate who will be accompanying them.
- The panel will decide upon an appropriate course of action and the complainant would be notified in writing of the decision made.

- The panel may make findings and recommendations and a copy of these will be given to the complainant, Board of Directors and Headmaster, and, where relevant, the person complained about.
- NB – where further investigation is necessary, new time limits can be set.

The Board of Directors-appointed panel is the final arbiter of complaints.

5. Considerations affecting Complaints

5.1 As far as possible, complaints will be dealt with on a confidential basis. However, there could be occasions when the person dealing with your concern or complaint will need to consider whether anyone else within the School needs to know about the complaint, so as to deal with it appropriately.

5.2 Complaints should be raised as soon as is practicable, usually within 10 school days of any incident. A significant passage of time may make it more difficult for those involved to deal with it effectively.

5.3 Students may raise concerns with their form tutor or senior member of staff. This will not stop them, at a later date, from raising a complaint if they feel that the issue(s) they have raised have not been dealt with properly.

5.4 The person overseeing the complaint will keep the complainant informed of the progress being made. This person will also keep a log of the concern for future reference.

5.5 Correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential. The Board of Directors will keep the records of documents used to investigate complaints for seven years after it has been dealt with. Records will be kept in school and reviewed by the Board of Directors after seven years to decide if they need to be kept for longer.

5.6 Complaints that are made anonymously will be recorded but investigation will be at the discretion of the School depending on the nature of the complaint.

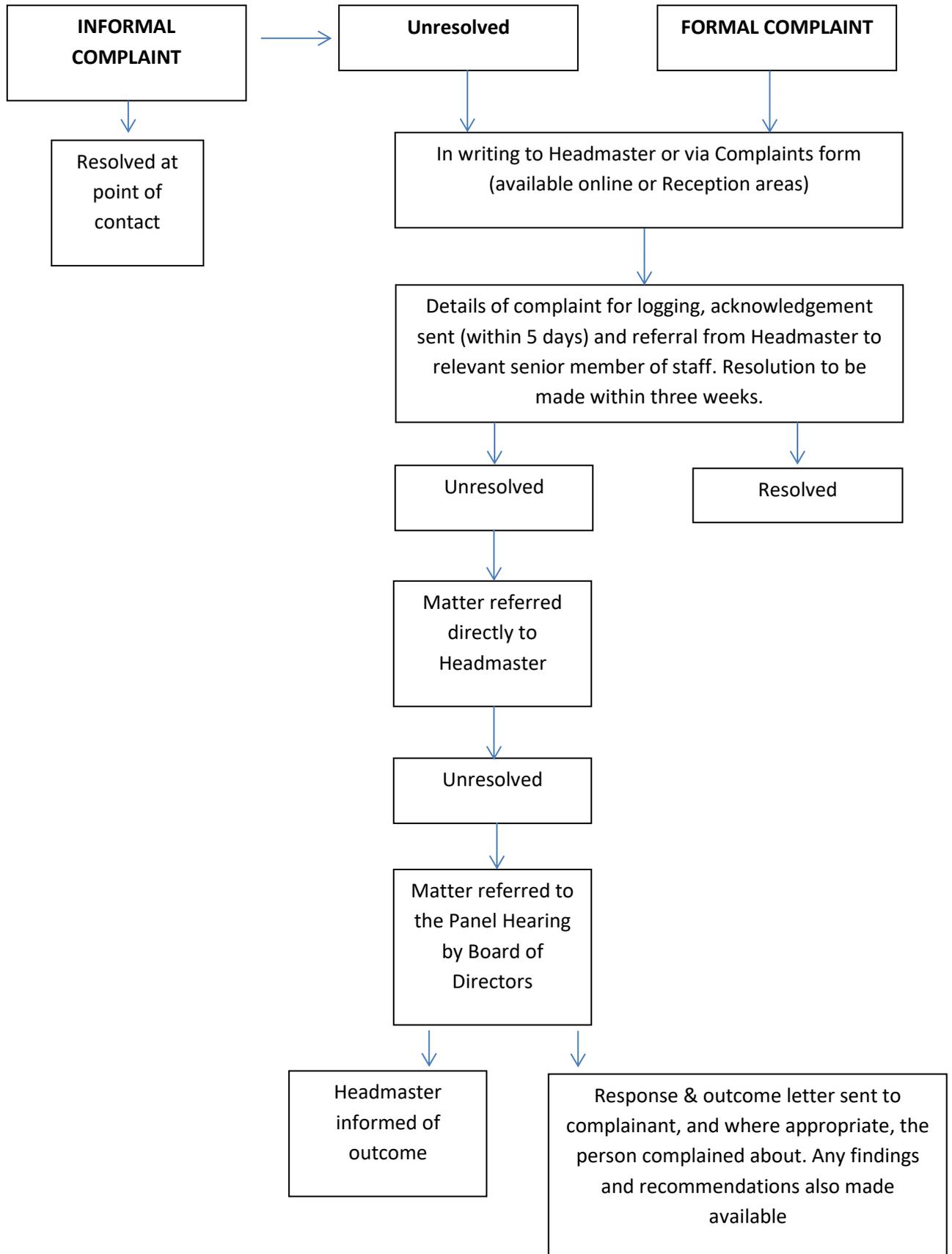
5.7 Where complaints are considered to have been made only to cause harm or offence to individuals or the School, the Board of Directors will ensure that

records are kept of the investigations that are made and what actions are taken, including the reasons for 'no action'.

6. Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be discussed, reviewed and revised annually, in consultation with students, parents, staff and members of the school community, including the Board of Directors.

7. Redhill School Complaints Procedure



Appendix 1 – Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Form

Redhill High School Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Form.

If you wish to make a complaint, direct a compliment or make a suggestion about anything to do with the School, please use this form and return to the Headmaster. (If you have a complaint about the Headmaster you will need to send the Form to the Chair of the Board of Directors).

Your Details

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number (Home):

Telephone Number (Day):

Telephone Number (Mobile):

Name of Child:

Date of Birth of Child:

Detail of complaint / compliment / suggestion (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Signed:

Date: