



Ratcliffe College

Parents' Complaints Procedure

Ratcliffe College welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and prospective parents, and takes seriously complaints and concerns they may raise. The following shows you how to use our complaints procedure.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction, which needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time, and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate

"How should I complain?"

You can talk directly to a member of staff, write a letter, or telephone. Be as clear as possible about what is troubling you.

Any member of staff will be happy to help. It is best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, to raise routine academic or pastoral matters with the Form Tutor or Head of Year, boarding matters with the Housemaster/Housemistress, matters regarding finance, fees and non-academic services with the Director's Department (the Director's Secretary can refer you to the appropriate Section Head). They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take a more serious matter to a senior member of staff, for example the Deputy/Assistant Heads (Mrs Clayfield – Academic concerns, Mr Reddin – Pastoral concerns, Mr Sharpe – Boarding concerns), the Director of Finance, Mr Robson – Financial/non-academic concerns, or the Headmaster.

"I don't want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me."

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

"I am not sure whether to complain or not."

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to complain. If in doubt, you should contact the school as we are here to help.



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"What will happen next?"

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, staff, including the Headmaster and Governors, will contact you within five working days, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding in detail. If a detailed exploration of the issues is needed, a response will be prepared for you as quickly as it is reasonable to do so in the particular circumstances.

In responding to complaints, we recognise the importance of confidentiality and fairness, and the need to ensure that a complaint made by parents will not rebound adversely on their children.

"What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?"

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you feel that your concern or suggestion has not been considered fully and fairly, please contact the Headmaster. If you are unhappy with the way that the Headmaster has handled a concern, please contact him again. If you remain unhappy, then please contact the Chairman of Governors; you can write to him in confidence c/o the Clerk to the Governors.

Procedure when a parent refers a complaint to the Chairman of Governors

When you contact the Chairman of Governors (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), you will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

Chairman of Governor's:
Dr C. Draycott
Colin Draycott Holdings Limited
Central House
11 Great Central Road
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 1 RW
01509 232383
E-mail: jillbrodie@hotmail.com



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- 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 matter detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Clerk to the Governors, on behalf on the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and within five working days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any 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.
- You 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 your complaint immediately without need for further investigation.
- When further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all the facts 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 you informing you 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 electronically or otherwise to you, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of and will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors or Head.
- A written record will therefore be kept of all complaints and resolutions.

You can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State, Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Act, as amended, requests access to them; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the young people in our care.

A hardcopy of this policy may be requested from the school Reception.



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In the unlikely event that a complaint by a parent cannot be resolved through the school's published procedures, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) can be contacted directly.

Office for Standards in Education
Children's Services & Skills
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Tel: 08456 404040

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

With reference to complaints, including those pertaining to Early Years, these are kept on record for three years. If a complaint is made, the School will indicate whether that complaint was settled at an early stage, or if it went to a panel hearing.

In 2008-2009 Ratcliffe College received no formal complaints as per our stated policy.