

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Author/reviewer responsible:	NM	ISI document code:	33a Complaints procedure
Reviewed by:	SMT	Last amended:	November 2018
Authorisation by resolution of:	Governors	Date of authorisation:	June 2020
		Date of next review:	June 2021

Whom this complaints procedure is for

This complaints procedure is for parents of pupils at the School who wish to make a complaint.

The School's complaints procedure is provided to parents of current and prospective boys, and to all staff. It can be downloaded from the School's website: www.choirschool.com.

Boarders have their own, separate complaints procedure, which is displayed publicly in the boarding house phone booth, and contained in the *Parents' Handbook – Boarding*, which can also be downloaded from the School website.

Requirements of this policy

This policy complies with Part 7 of the [Education \(Independent Schools Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

Boarding

The School's complaints procedure complies with Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the regulatory body which now inspects boarding schools.

Complaints and external bodies

ISI is not responsible for individual complaints about the day-to-day running of a school. The chain of complaint is:

1. Head Master
2. Governing body
3. Department for Education

(There is a possibility that Local Authorities may be involved in the chain of complaint – for example, when the complaint concerns child safeguarding, prolonged absences from School or statements of special educational needs.)

Guidance on school issues can be obtained from DfE public enquiries.

Tel 0370 000 2288

School inspections

Parents are notified of forthcoming ISI inspections. The inspection team cannot investigate or comment on individual complaints, but will look for examples of the School's compliance with its own policies and with regulatory requirements.

THE THREE-STAGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally through an email exchange or meeting, within seven working days; a member of the SMT may assist with finding an informal resolution.

Stage 2 – Formal resolution

- If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents should put their complaint in writing, within seven working days, to the Head Master. The Head Master will then decide the appropriate course of action to take.
- The Head Master will make the person against whom the complaint has been made aware that a formal complaint has been received as soon as reasonably practicable.
- A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, and of how, and at what stage, they were resolved.
- In the case of complaints which raise issues of safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, the School's safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- In most cases the Head Master will meet with the parents concerned, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head Master to carry out further investigations.
- The Head Master will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint and may ask his PA to record the meeting.
- Once the Head Master is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head Master will also give reasons for his decision.
- Stage 2 of the process will be completed within 28 days (unless holidays dictate that it is not practicable to do so).
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this procedure. The School will record any findings and recommendations, whether or not the complaint is upheld, including the actions taken by the school, regardless of whether the complaint is upheld.

Stage 3 – Panel hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to the Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the complaints panel.
- 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 matters 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 of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen days.
- If the panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied to all parties not later than seven days

prior to the hearing.

- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation is not appropriate.
- If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where 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 fourteen days of the hearing. The panel will write to the parents informing them 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 in writing to the parents, the Head Master, the Governors and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint has been made. The School will record any findings and recommendations, whether or not the complaint is upheld, including the actions taken by the school regardless of whether the complaint is upheld.

All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except insofar as is required of the School by Part 7 of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails. For relevant agencies (e.g. the ISI), full records, including findings and recommendations, are available onsite.

Parents may ask for the number of complaints registered under the formal Complaints Procedure during the preceding School year.

Tel 020 7931 6099

Email office@choirschool.com

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – boys in Reception

Additional requirements apply for the EYFS setting – at WCCS, that means boys in Reception – beyond those which apply to the rest of the School.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) on request.

Parents can contact ISI direct.

Tel 020 7600 0100

Email concerns@isi.net

Parents can also contact Ofsted direct.

Tel 0300 1234 234

Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (IN RELATION TO MEMBERS OF THE CATHEDRAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT)

Author/reviewer responsible:	AM	ISI document code:	A14
Reviewed by:	MT	Last amended:	6/15
Authorisation by resolution of:	CT	Date of authorisation:	6/15
		Date of next review:	Occasional

This complaints procedure is provided to parents of current and prospective choristers, and to all staff. It is also posted on the School website, www.choirschool.com. (For the complaints procedure in relation to members of the School's staff, please see the Parents' Handbook or the School website.)

Complaints in relation to members of the Cathedral Music Department are handled by the Cathedral Administrator:

Canon Christopher Tuckwell
Clergy House
Ambrosden Avenue
London
SW1P 1QW

Tel 020 7798 9055

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally with the Head of Boarding, within seven working days.

Stage 2 – Formal resolution

- If a complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents should put their complaint in writing, within seven working days, to the Cathedral Administrator. He will then decide the appropriate course of action to take.
- The Cathedral Administrator will make the person against whom the complaint has been made aware that a formal complaint has been received as soon as reasonably practicable.
- A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, and of how, and at what stage, they were resolved.
- In the case of complaints which raise issues of safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, the Cathedral's Safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- In most cases the Cathedral Administrator will meet with the parents concerned, normally within seven days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Cathedral Administrator to carry out further

investigations.

- The Cathedral Administrator will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint and may ask a member of Cathedral staff to record the meeting.
- Once the Cathedral Administrator is satisfied that, so far as practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Cathedral Administrator will also give reasons for his decision.
- Stage 2 of the process will be completed within 28 days of the formal complaint being received (unless holidays dictate that it is not practicable to do so). If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to an Auxiliary Bishop or the Vicar General of the Westminster Diocese, who has been appointed by the Diocese to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.
- 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 matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the Cathedral. Each of the panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of the Panel. The Chair of the Panel's PA, on behalf of the panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within fourteen days.
- If the panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied to all parties not later than seven days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, colleague or friend. Legal representation is not appropriate.
- If possible, the panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where 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 fourteen days of the hearing. The panel will write to the parents informing them 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 in writing to the parents, the Cathedral Administrator, and where relevant, the person about whom the complaint has been made. The School will record any findings and recommendations, whether or not the complaint is upheld.

All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. For relevant agencies (e.g. the ISI), full records, including findings and recommendations, are available onsite.