

What To Do If You Have a Worry or Complaint

Concerns and Complaints Procedure for Pupils

Queen's College, Taunton

August 2019 (v.3)

Introduction

Here at Queen's College, Taunton, we want everyone to feel part of a safe and happy community. From time to time, you may be worried or upset about something. This policy tells you about various people available to help you, so that you can choose someone you feel you can trust.

The experience of pupils in this and other schools is that, no matter how bad the problem may seem to be, it is almost always a great help to talk about it.

Is something worrying you?

Here are some examples of the kinds of thing which can be worrying for young people:

- you are having difficulty with one or more of your school subjects
- you think you may be ill and are too afraid or embarrassed to tell anyone
- you feel very depressed, or that life is not worth living
- you or your friends are being bullied or treated unkindly by another pupil
- you think that another pupil is not eating properly, or may be harming him/herself
- you are worried, angry or hurt about something happening at home
- you think that another pupil has done, or is about to do, something seriously wrong or dangerous
- you are caught in a serious situation that you don't know how to get out of, for example to do with drugs, alcohol, money or sex
- you feel you are being treated unfairly simply because you are a girl (or simply because you are a boy), or because of your colour or religion, or because you have a disability or learning difficulty, or because you may be lesbian or gay
- you feel that a member of staff has treated you unfairly e.g. in a punishment given, or in favouring other pupils
- you feel that you are not given enough privacy

What should you do?

If any of these things are happening, please talk to someone about it, even if you feel you can handle the situation. It may be that what's going on affects other people at school, or that you are unaware of all the different ways a problem can be tackled.

There are a number of different people who will be very happy to talk to you and to help you try to find a solution to the problem. It may help to talk first with another pupil who is a trusted friend. However, sometimes you may also need the help and support of an adult or professional. Choose whoever you feel most comfortable and safe talking to.

You might wish to talk to:

- your Tutor
- your Year Leader
- Head of Boarding
- the Matron/School Nursing Team

- any other member of staff

If you have a concern or complaint about the School or a member of staff, speaking to one of these people is normally the quickest and most effective way to get to the heart of the problem and resolve it.

If you feel unable to raise your concern with any of these people, others you can talk to are:

- your parents or other relatives
- the Chaplain
- the School Counsellor
- an older pupil at the School
- a House or School Prefect
- the School Doctor
- the Nominated Safeguarding Governors: name and contact details can be found in Appendix A of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- **Children's Commissioner:** 0800 528 0731
- **ChildLine:** 0800 1111
- **Designated Safeguarding Leads:** names and contact details can be found in Appendix A of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

An Independent Listener is also available to talk to and pupils may contact them directly about any personal problems at school. This is a person who lives locally but has no formal connection with the School. The contact details of the Independent Listener can be found in Appendix A of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If you prefer, you can write to any of the people mentioned, although this does sometimes slow things down.

You will also be able to raise concerns through the School Council by speaking with your House Representatives.

Making a formal complaint

If you feel that you have not been able to sort out a concern or complaint on an informal basis you have the right to make a formal complaint. You may wish to involve your parents at this stage if you have not already done so.

You should put your complaint in writing to the Deputy Head/Head Teacher setting out the complaint and what you want to be done about it. You will not get into trouble for making a complaint if you believe that you have a good reason for doing so.

The Deputy Head/Head Teacher may suggest a meeting with him/her or another senior member of staff to discuss the complaint. You may be accompanied to any meeting by a friend or another member of staff. In all cases, you will receive a written answer to your formal complaint explaining what has been decided about the complaint and any action that will be taken.

The Head Teacher will be informed of all written complaints from pupils.

The Deputy Head will keep a record of serious complaints from pupils and what happened to those complaints and will review this record from time to time.

What if you disagree with a decision made by the School about your complaint?

You may wish to involve your parents if you have not already done so. Your parents may wish to make a complaint under the School's parental Complaints Procedure which is available on the School's website.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (**ISI**) is the body responsible for the inspection of the School. If you would like ISI to know about your concern, you can email concerns@isi.net, telephone 020 7600 0100. -

Effective date of the policy	30 th August 2019
SLG Responsible Member	Andrew Free, Deputy Head

Authorised by	Board of Governors
Signed	Mark Edwards, Chair of Governors
Date	30 th August 2019