



TotalTuition

ROSEWOOD  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

*Rosewood Independent School is a trading name of Total Tuition Limited.*

*This policy covers all students at Total Tuition Alternative Provision and Rosewood Independent School.*

## Complaints Procedure

**Purpose:** To establish a procedure for dealing with complaints relating to Total Tuition Alternative Provision / Rosewood Independent School, as required by section 29(1)(a) of the Education Act 2002.

**Scope:** All matters relating to the actions of staff and application of procedures where they affect the individual pupils concerned.

### What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff, and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the school. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, failed to do something that it should have done or has acted unfairly. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you, or your child, raises in good faith.

### General Principles:

- o An anonymous complaint will not be investigated under this procedure unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- o To allow for a proper investigation, complaints should be brought to the attention of the centre as soon as possible. Any matter raised more than 3 months after the event being complained of will not be considered, save in exceptional circumstances.
- o Investigation of any complaint or review request will begin within 5 working days, save in exceptional circumstances. The investigation will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable.

This policy will be made available on the Total Tuition Alternative Provision / Rosewood Independent School website as of 1st September 2020. It is also available in the school or by email upon request. A printed copy is kept in the main office at the YMCA site.

## Part A

### Complaints about the actions of a member of staff other than the Headteacher

#### Informal Stage

A complainant is initially expected to communicate directly with the Headteacher, who in turn will discuss the complaint with the member/s of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by

appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved at this informal stage.

At the informal stage, we would also welcome feedback on our 'compliments and complaints' form that is available in the main office. This can be submitted anonymously. We endeavour to respond to any complaints on the feedback forms within one month, and will feedback on this to the complainant if anonymity is not requested.

### **Formal Stage**

If the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage the complainant must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Headteacher, who will be responsible for its further investigation.

The complainant should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. In addition the Headteacher is likely to arrange to meet with the complainant and/or relevant schools or local authorities to clarify the issues.

The Headteacher will collect such other evidence as she deems necessary. Where this involves an interview with a member of staff, who is the subject of the complaint, a friend or representative may accompany that member of staff if they wish.

The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

The investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded (usually within 10 working days), the complainant, and the member of staff concerned, will be informed in writing of the outcome. This may be to the effect that:

- There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld
- The concern is not substantiated by the evidence
- The concern was substantiated in part or in full. Some details may then be given of action the centre will be taking to review procedures etc.
- The matter has been fully investigated and that appropriate disciplinary procedures are being followed, which are strictly confidential.

The complainant will be told that consideration of their complaint by the Headteacher is now concluded.

**If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, the complainant may request an Appeal. Please see Part C.**

## **Part B**

### **Complaining about the actions of the Headteacher**

#### **Informal stage**

A complainant is usually expected to arrange to speak directly with the Headteacher in the first instance. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information.

## **Formal Stage**

If the complaint is not resolved at the informal stage the complainant must put the complaint in writing and pass it to our Proprietor.

The complainant should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, copies of relevant documents etc. In addition the complainant is likely to be invited to meet with a meeting consisting of the Proprietor to present oral evidence or to clarify the issues. If the Proprietor deems it necessary, additional members of the Advisory Board may also be informed of the complaint and invited to participate in any relevant decision-making.

The Headteacher will be provided with a copy of the complaint and any additional evidence presented by the complainant or collected by the Proprietor. Once there has been an opportunity for the Headteacher to consider this, she will be invited to meet separately with the Proprietor, in order to present written and oral evidence in response. A friend or representative may accompany the Headteacher at this meeting.

When the investigation has been concluded, the complainant and the Headteacher will be informed in writing of the outcome. The complainant will not be given details of any disciplinary/capability action.

The complainant will be told that consideration of their complaint is now concluded.

**If the complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, the complainant may request an Appeal. Please see Part C.**

Complainants will be encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem at any stage during the resolution of the complaint.

## **Part C**

### **Right of Appeal**

The individual making the complaint has the right to appeal to an Appeal Panel, in writing, within 10 working days of receiving written notification of the decision. They must contact the Headteacher or Proprietor in writing and the appeal should take place within 10 days of the of notification of an appeal.

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 normally not later than 7 days prior to the hearing.

The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

The Panel will include be appointed by or on behalf of the Proprietor and will consist of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One Panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

Panel members will be asked to consider the substance of the original complaint and the response provided to this complaint by the Headteacher.

The Panel will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and:

Reach a unanimous, or at least a majority decision, on the complaint;

Decide upon the appropriate action (if any) to be taken;

Where appropriate, suggest changes to, or request a review of, the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not happen again.

The Panel will write to the complainant informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, normally within 5 working days of the hearing. The decision of the Panel will be final. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, and, where relevant, the person complained about.

There is no further right of appeal and the findings of the Appeal Panel will be binding on all parties.

### **Conduct of the Appeal Hearing:**

All parties will be reminded that the proceedings must remain confidential.

The complaint will be set out by the complainant or their representative. Any relevant witnesses or witness statements may be considered, and expert advice can be sought if appropriate.

The Panel may ask questions of the complainant or any witnesses.

The Panel will then ask the Proprietor/Investigating Officer to explain his/her decision and to offer any evidence including any relevant witnesses or witness statements.

The complainant may ask questions of the Proprietor/Investigating Officer and any witnesses.

At any point the Appeal Panel members can ask questions of all parties.

The Appeal Panel will ask the Proprietor/Investigating Officer to sum up his/her decision.

The Appeal Panel will finally ask the complainant or representative to sum up on behalf of the complainant.

At the end of the meeting the Appeal Panel will consider its decision without any other party being present (except where a clerk may be present for the purpose of taking minutes).

### **Adjournment:**

The Panel may adjourn the proceedings at any stage if this appears necessary or desirable. If the adjournment is for the purpose of enabling further information to be obtained the Panel will specify the nature of that information.

All parties may ask for an adjournment for the purpose of consultation.

Any adjournment will normally be for a specified time.

### **Recording complaints:**

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

Date when the issue was raised

Name of parent

Name of pupil

Description of the issue

Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)

Witness statements (if appropriate)

Name of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage

Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an Inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them or they are required by paragraph 33(k) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

#### **Timeframe for dealing with complaints:**

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Part C, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed within a further 28 days, if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

In general, the time limits and deadlines contained within this policy should be adhered to. However, in certain circumstances it may be deemed inappropriate or impossible to guarantee that this is possible. Where a complaint leads to criminal proceedings this will always be the case. If and when it becomes necessary to alter the time limits and deadlines set out within this policy, the complainant should be told and given an explanation as to why this has been the case.

#### **Witness Statements:**

If witness statements have been obtained during the course of any investigation all parties must be given copies of them at least 5 working days before the meeting. A shorter period may be agreed by the parties. Where there is a request to preserve the anonymity of a witness the Proprietor should be consulted before any decision is made.

#### **Witnesses:**

Either side may introduce witnesses to the meeting with the Headteacher or Appeal Panel hearing, but must notify all relevant parties at least 5 working days that they intend to do so. It should be noted that new evidence cannot be introduced at the Appeal stage.

#### **Issues related to child protection, criminal investigations and employee grievances will be handled separately from this policy.**

This complaints policy is distinct from formal staff disciplinary proceedings and this should be made clear to all concerned. There may be occasions where a complaint gives rise to disciplinary procedures which put the complaints process on hold. If and when this occurs, the complainant should be informed. Any non-disciplinary aspects of the complaint should continue to be dealt with through the usual complaints procedures. If another policy is more appropriate than this complaints policy for any given situation then it should be used in preference to it.

Parents may complain directly to Ofsted if they believe the school is not meeting the Independent School Standards.

Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 1234 234 or by email: [[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).]

**Policy tracker:**

Jennifer Wood, Centre Director (Total Tuition)

Created: August 2018

Reviewed: August 2019 (Total Tuition)

Updated: July 2019 (Total Tuition) & July 2020 (Total Tuition Alternative Provision / Rosewood Independent School)

Next review: August 2021



Please complete this form and return it to Jennifer Wood, Total Tuition Alternative Provision / Rosewood Independent School Proprietor or Janice Woods, Total Tuition Alternative Provision / Rosewood Independent School Headteacher, who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

**Your name:**

**Relationship with centre (eg. parent of pupil):**

**Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):**

**Your address:**

**Telephone:**

**E-mail address:**

**Please give concise details of your complaint, including dates, names of witnesses etc., to allow the matter to be fully investigated: (Please add additional notes if required)**

**What action, if any, have you taken so far to try to resolve your complaint? Who have you spoken to and what was the outcome?**

**What actions do you feel might help resolve the problem at this stage?**

Signature:

Date:

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Complaints form received by:

Date:

Referred to:

Date:

### **CHILD FRIENDLY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**



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## **Do you need to make a complaint about your time at Total Tuition / Rosewood?**

### **1. Can your complaint be dealt with by your tutor?**

If your complaint is about your lessons, try talking to your tutor. They may be able to solve the problem quickly!

### **2. Is your complaint about your tutor, or something you are shy to talk about?**

You can fill in one of the complaints forms in our main office. You don't have to write your name on if you don't want to, but we might need some more information to help solve your complaint.

### **3. Is your complaint more serious?**

Ask for an urgent meeting with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will listen to your complaint and record what you say, and will act upon it very quickly.

**We will always update you on your complaint to reassure you that we are taking it seriously and working to solve the problem.**

**Remember:**

- The more information you give, the easier it will be to solve your complaint. This includes names where possible.
- We are open to hearing how you think the problem could be solved.