

KIRKHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT

COMPLAINTS

This is a whole-school policy and is applicable to Kirkham Grammar Senior School (KGS) and Kirkham Grammar Junior, Infant and Pre-School (KGJS)

Policy number: 37	Date last reviewed: March 2025	Next review: March 2028
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The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure for recent academic years can be seen in Appendix B.

INTRODUCTION

Kirkham Grammar School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However complaints and concerns may arise from time to time and it is intended that they are addressed informally as quickly as possible by the appropriate person. In the event that this is not possible then the procedures described below will be followed. It is recognised that complaints can come from many sources but this policy concentrates on those from parents/carers and thus potentially from pupils currently on roll, through their parents/carers.

For the purposes of this policy a complaint is defined as a written or oral expression that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable; that is not resolved at initial contact and requires intervention from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Any complaint made must be within three months of the actual event. Any complaint made beyond this timescale will not be considered. However, the school reserves the right to investigate historic complaints that may impact upon safeguarding and keeping children safe in education.

Complaints can only be made by current parents/carers. Complaints from parents/carers whose child has left or has not started will not be considered under this policy unless it is a safeguarding issue.

Complaints arising from internal assessments of work for external qualifications are covered in Appendix A.

STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- If parents/carers have a concern/potential complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Tutor unless the pupil is a boarder in which case the Head of Boarding should be contacted. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents'/carers' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor/Head of Boarding cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head of Year or member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Concerns/potential complaints made directly to the Head of Year or member of Senior Leadership Team will usually be referred to the relevant member of staff unless it is deemed appropriate for the matter to be dealt with directly.
- The teacher/Boarding House staff member will make a written record of all concerns/potential complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 14 working days, or in the event that the teacher/Boarding House staff member and the parents/carers fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parents/carers will be advised to write to, or to see personally, either the Head for the Senior School or the Headmistress for the Junior School.
- Concerns/potential complaints from pupils should initially be addressed through class teachers, form tutors or Heads of Year.

STAGE 2 – FORMAL RESOLUTION

- If the complaint has not been resolved on an informal basis, or is deemed more serious, then the parents/carers should put their complaint in writing to the Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take, which may include further investigation, which in the case of the Junior School may be delegated to the Headmistress at the Head's discretion.
- In most cases, the Head will speak to the parents/carers concerned as soon as possible, but always within 14 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage but further meetings may be necessary.
- The Headmistress will investigate written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 working days of having received the complaint.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint and whether the matter was resolved at a preliminary stage or after a panel hearing (see below).
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents/carers will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his decision, as appropriate. This formal response will be made within 28 days.

- If parents/carers are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

STAGE 3 – PANEL HEARING

- If parents/carers seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chairman of 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 Governors. The Chairman of 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 14 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 5 working days prior to the hearing.
- The parents/carers 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 the parents'/carers' 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 7 working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents/carers 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/carers, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents/carers can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

Kirkham Grammar School
Registered Charity No: 1123869 and Registered Company No: 6195985

KIRKHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL

APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF WORK FOR EXTERNAL QUALIFICATIONS

Kirkham Grammar School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess pupils' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. Pupils' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examinations board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation.

If a pupil feels that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.

This procedure is available from the Head's PA, and is posted on the examinations notice board.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series. (So the appeal must be made two weeks before a date in mid-June for the summer series as presently timetabled.)
2. Appeals should be made in writing to the Examinations Officer, who will investigate the appeal. If the Examinations Officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, the Head will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the Examinations Officer is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
3. The Examinations Officer or other member of staff will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the JCQ. This will be done before the end of the series. (Currently the end of June for the summer series.)
4. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any correspondence with the board, any changes made to the assessment of a piece of work, and any changes made to improve matters in future.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Head, and will be logged as a complaint under the complaints procedure. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body (examinations board) to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of Kirkham Grammar School and is not covered by this procedure. People with concerns about it, should ask the Examinations Officer for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant examinations board.

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RECORD OF COMPLAINTS

The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure is:

2018-2019 2

2019-2020 6

2020-2021 0

2021-2022 0

2022-2023 1

2023-2024 4