Felsted

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

WHOLE SCHOOL
INCLUDING EYFS AND BOARDING

Governors' Committee normally reviewing:	Regulatory Compliance & Governance Group
Date last formally approved by the Governors:	Spring Term 2026 Interim updates Summer 2026
Date Policy became effective:	November 2009

Period of Review:	Annually
Next Review Date:	Spring Term 2027

Person responsible for implementation and monitoring:	Heads
Other relevant policies:	• Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • Staff Behaviour Policy • Equality Policy • Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy • Curriculum Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Educational Visits Policy • Admissions Policy • Accessibility Plan • Support for Learning (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Policy • Learning and Teaching Policy • Behaviour and Discipline Policy • Permanent Exclusion (Expulsion) Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Examinations Policy (Senior) • Parent Code of Conduct

The following Policy encompasses the Aims and Ethos of the Preparatory School and the Senior School

Aims and Ethos

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT
Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT
The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of their characteristics and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

Felsted School ("the School") makes its Complaints Policy and Procedure available to all parents of pupils on the School's website **www.felsted.org** and in the School office during the school day. The School will ensure that parents of pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and of the form in which it is published or available.

This Policy and Procedure applies to parents of current pupils in so far as the complaint relates to a current registered pupil, and parents of past pupils if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered as a pupil at the School.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible. To also enable effective review, the School expects complaints to be raised within 90 calendar days of an issue arising. Complaints will only be accepted outside this timeline in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Chair of Governors. Parents are therefore expected to proceed with their complaint in a timely and reasonable manner. It is expected that if parents wish to escalate their complaint to the next stage of the Procedure, they will generally do so within 15 working days of the conclusion of the current Stage. Depending upon the circumstances, the School may, acting reasonably, treat a complaint as closed if a parent has not proceeded within this timeframe. The School will only consider complaints made outside of the stipulated timeframes if exceptional circumstances apply which impeded the parents from taking timely action.

Note that a working day for the purposes of this procedure is defined as a weekday (Monday to Friday) during term time, not including INSET days and that all references to 'parents' means the holder(s) of parental responsibility for a pupil about whom the complaint relates and includes guardians and carers.

Timescales for investigating and/or responding to a complaint may need to be extended. The School will inform parents if there may be a delay to the anticipated timescales, for instance, as a consequence of disruption to the School, unavoidable staff absence or site closure or where a complaint is received immediately prior to School holidays commencing. The School will take all reasonable steps to limit any delay during School term time. The School expects parents to engage in the process in a reasonable, constructive and responsive manner to help ensure matters can be dealt with in a timely way and in line with the targets set out in this procedure. If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example, the police or local authority safeguarding teams, this may also impact on the School's ability to adhere to the timescales within this policy or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations. If this happens, the School will inform parents of a proposed new timescale.

Appendix 1 sets out the procedure for pupil complaints.

Complaints that fall outside this procedure

Although there is not a legal requirement for the School to deal with complaints by prospective parents, the School will seek to respond to any complaint that is addressed to the Admissions Department, or (if about the Admissions Department) to the Head, in a timely manner. Such response falls outside of this Complaints Procedure. As such, although this procedure is made available to parents of prospective pupils for information, it is not available for use by them.

More generally, the School is not legally obliged to consider complaints from members of the public (such as from individuals who are not current parents of pupils at the School) or from anonymous complainants. Should, however, the School decide to consider such a

complaint, it will determine the appropriate means of doing so. For the avoidance of doubt, this procedure, will, at all times, be in the School's absolute discretion, and the School shall not be required to consider such complaints pursuant to any specific process or timeframe including under this policy.

Please see the School's Data Protection Policy for more information where the subject of a complaint is data protection. The School may offer to resolve this under this Policy where possible and appropriate to do so and with the agreement of the relevant complainant, but the School is not obliged to do so (and a complaint is not obliged to agree to use the Complaints Policy in such circumstances).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Felsted School is committed to delivering a high quality of academic teaching and pastoral care, welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and pupils, and takes seriously concerns and complaints that may arise.

1.2 Wherever possible the School seeks to resolve concerns and complaints in a timely manner through an informal process, resorting to a formal process only where informal means have not been successful.

1.3 As the School provides boarding accommodation, this Complaints Policy and Procedure is drawn up with regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

1.4 This Policy also meets the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ("the ISS Regulations") Part 7 and the Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS") Framework.

1.5 In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the ISS Regulations, the School will make this Policy available to parents on the School website and in hard copy in the Preparatory and Senior School Reception and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the Complaints Procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

1.6 For the purposes of this Complaints Policy and Procedure, a complaint constitutes an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem, and/or any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the School. A complaint may be about a member of staff or the School as a whole, relating to any aspects of the School or the provision of facilities or services. The School is here for its pupils and parents can be assured that their child will not be penalised for a complaint that they raise in good faith.

1.7 Appeals against permanent exclusions or required removals are heard under the Permanent Exclusion (Expulsion) Policy Appeal Procedure available on the School website.

1.8 The School will be mindful of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in the application of this policy.

1.9 Requests for financial awards, such as claims for compensation, damages or fee refunds, are beyond the scope of this procedure.

1.10 Although the School endeavours to manage complaints in an open and transparent manner, parents should be aware that there may be circumstances which mean the

School is unable to share complete details about how a complaint has been handled by the School, the evidence collated, steps taken in response or other related matters. This could be the case even when a complaint is upheld. For example, this may be because such information constitutes sensitive third-party data (for example belonging to a staff member, pupil or another parent), legal or regulatory requirements prohibit disclosure, or withholding information is in accordance with specific instructions from a statutory agency. This list is not exhaustive. All parents should also be aware that regardless of the nature of a complaint and whether or not it is upheld, parents are not entitled to details of any related sanctions imposed on staff, pupils or parents.

1.11 Parents should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. Governors have no power to act on an individual basis, and it may prevent them from considering complaints if escalated to Stage 3 of this procedure.

2. AIMS

We wish to ensure that:

- Parents who wish to raise a concern or make a complaint know how to do so, initially on an informal basis and, if necessary, through a formal procedure;
- We respond to such concerns or complaints in a courteous and efficient way;
- All complaints are managed in the timescales set out in this Policy and where this is not possible, such as where there is a delay in collecting information, for example, owing to staff absence) the School will liaise with parents to inform them of the anticipated timescales;
- Parents understand that we listen and take concerns and complaints seriously and confidentially;
- We take action where appropriate;
- If a parent is not satisfied with the response to a formal written complaint, there is a procedure that they can follow and provision for them to attend a meeting with a Complaints Panel.

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3.1 In the event that a potential conflict of interest exists in relation to a complaint, then the member of staff or Governor who has the potential conflict of interest ('the conflicted party') cannot be involved in the Complaints Procedure and their place in the complaints process (if any) will be taken by another member of staff nominated by the Head of the Senior School or Preparatory School, or another Governor (as appropriate). If the conflicted party is the Head of the Senior School or Preparatory School, the complaint will generally be dealt with by the Head not conflicted or, where appropriate, a Governor nominated by the Chair of Governors.

3.2 A conflict of interest can arise in a number of ways, including the following by way of example:

i. the individual making the complaint is also a member of staff or Governor;
ii. the individual making the complaint is related to or has a close personal relationship with a member of staff or Governor; or
iii. the subject of the complaint is related to or has a close personal relationship with a member of staff or Governor.

4. STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION

4.1 Parents may talk to, email, write a letter to or telephone the School directly and should clearly state in any communication on what basis they are contacting the School. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

4.2 The communication may be to any member of staff, though normally a significant matter should be addressed to the Housemaster or Housemistress at the Senior School or to the Head of Phase or Boarding House Parents in the Preparatory School. A significant academic matter should be addressed to a member of the Leadership Team. If the member of staff who receives the complaint cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for a senior member of staff to be consulted.

4.3 The relevant member of staff will acknowledge the complaint within two working days of receipt. The member of staff will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint or fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure. The parents will be expected to elevate their complaint to Stage 2 within a reasonable timeframe, ordinarily within 15 working days of receiving the outcome of Stage 1.

5. STAGE 2 – FORMAL RESOLUTION

5.1 If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis at Stage 1 then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head of the Senior School or the Preparatory School together with the outcome they are seeking. If the complaint is against the Head, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors or a Governor nominated by the Chair of Governors will review the complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this Procedure.

5.2 The School will acknowledge a formal complaint within 5 working days, explaining how it proposes to proceed and setting a date (not normally more than 15 working days from the date of receipt of the formal complaint) by which time a response will be provided. The Head (or their nominee) will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take which may include speaking with the parents concerned and carrying out further investigation. This may affect timescales and if so, the Head (or their nominee) will keep parents informed of a date for a response. A written record will be kept of any meetings and interviews held in relation to Stage 2 of the complaint.

5.3 Once the Head (or their nominee) is satisfied that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established a decision will be made and the parents informed in writing. This will normally be within 15 working days of having received the Stage 2 complaint. The response will set out the Head's conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed. The School hopes that parents will be satisfied with the outcome.

5.4 Knowledge of formal complaints will be limited as far as reasonably possible, to the Head, those directly involved, the Bursar and the Chair of Governors. Any action taken under staff disciplinary procedures as a result of complaints would be handled confidentially within the School.

5.5 If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure within 15 working days of the Stage 2 decision being communicated

to them. If parents do not invoke Stage 3 within this timeframe the School may, acting reasonably, deem the complaint closed.

6 STAGE 3 – PANEL MEETING

6.1 If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they should do so in writing to the Clerk to the Governors normally be within 15 working days of receiving the Stage 2 response. To the extent the parents are unable to provide their complaint within the time period stipulated due to extenuating circumstances which have impeded the parents from taking action, the parents should request an extension in writing. Such a request should be made to the Clerk to the Governors in advance of the original deadline, setting out the further time period requested and the reason for this. This will be considered. In the event the parents are unable to provide their complaint within the time period stipulated (including to the extent applicable any extensions if agreed) the School reserves the right to conclude the complaint process and not progress the matter to Stage 3.

6.2 The request for a Stage 3 Panel hearing should be addressed in writing (email or letter) directly to the Clerk to the Governors setting out the reasons for continuing dissatisfaction, the desired outcome and requesting a meeting with a Complaints Panel ("the Panel Parents should also ensure a copy of all relevant documents accompany the request wherever possible.

6.3 The Clerk to the Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel, will then convene a Panel consisting of three persons nominated by the Chair and not directly involved in the matter detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. The Complaints Panel will appoint one of the Panel members to act as the Chair of the Panel. The Clerk to the Governors will, on behalf of the Panel, acknowledge the request for a Stage 3 hearing and convene a date for the meeting.

6.4 Wherever possible, the Panel shall meet – either in person or remotely - within 20 working days of receipt of an appeal notice. If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of its meeting or further investigation be carried out. Copies of such further particulars shall be supplied to all parties, where possible, no later than three working days prior to the meeting. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

6.5 The parents may attend the meeting of the Panel and may be accompanied by one other person if they wish. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. A Complaints Panel is a non-legal forum, and there is no right to have a legal representative make representations on parents' behalf. As such, legal representation will not be appropriate and the companion should not be a lawyer. The parents should notify the Clerk to the Governors at least 3 working days in advance of the Panel meeting of the name and occupation of an accompanying person (if relevant) and any reasonable adjustments required by the parents. The parents' companion must undertake to accept the confidentiality of proceedings and the complaint and shall have no right to address the Panel unless expressly invited to by the Panel. The School representative may also be accompanied to the meeting by one other person if they wish. If the Panel meeting is taking place remotely, it will also be necessary to provide relevant contact details in order to enable them to attend. If parents are unable to attend on the date of the meeting they may request a postponement, which the Clerk to the Governors may seek to accommodate. Only one such postponement may be sought and it may result in the meeting being held more than 20 working days after receipt of the appeal notice. If parents decide that they do not wish to

attend the meeting, the Panel will proceed to hear the complaint in their absence and issue written findings on the substance of the complaint.

6.6 The Panel meeting will be as informal as circumstances allow and conducted in such a manner as permitted at the discretion of the Panel. The Panel is a non-legal forum and as such, cannot make findings as to points of law. The remit of the Panel shall be at the discretion of the Chair of Governors and the manner in which the hearing is conducted shall be at the discretion of the Panel. The proceedings of the Panel meeting are confidential.

6.7 Unless the Chair of the Panel has received a written request in advance of the meeting for it to be recorded, and has provided their express written permission to do so, any recording of the meeting is prohibited. The Panel may ask for a note taker (e.g. a member of the School's administrative team) to be present during the Panel meeting to take notes of the proceedings. Any such notes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript, and are simply for the benefit of the Panel, so that they can focus on listening to the parents' concerns. All present at the Panel meeting will be also entitled, should they wish, to write their own notes for reference purposes.

6.8 The Panel may seek such additional information as it may direct prior to reaching a decision. After due consideration of the merits of the complaint and all the facts it considers relevant, the Panel will make findings as to whether or not the Stage 2 decision was a reasonable one and accordingly decide whether to:

- Dismiss the complaint(s) in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint(s) in whole or in part;
- Make recommendations for the School to consider. Stage 3 Panels cannot require that any financial compensation is paid to parents or otherwise obligate the School to take particular steps.

6.9 The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its final decision and the reasons for it as soon as possible and normally within 15 working days of the meeting, (although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following the meeting). The decision of the Panel will be final and represents the conclusion of the School's Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the parents, the Head, Chair of Governors and, where relevant, any person complained about. A copy of the decision and any recommendations will also be made available for inspection at the School premises by the Governors and the Head.

7. WRITTEN COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EYFS

7.1 Parents of EYFS children should follow the three Stages of this Complaints Procedure. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated in accordance with Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure and the parent will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 (calendar) days from the date the complaint was received. Stage 3 above will be available to parents if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2.

7.2 The School will provide ISI and/or Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period, and the action that was taken as a result of each complaint, which will include details of whether the complaint was upheld. The record of any such complaints will be kept for at least three years.

7.3 Parents may also complain directly to ISI, or Ofsted if they believe that the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements:
ISI may be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or by email: info@isi.net
Ofsted may be contacted on 0300 123 4666 or by email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

8. RECORD KEEPING AND DATA PROTECTION

8.1 A Complaints Log is kept of all formal complaints (including those that relate to the EYFS provision and boarding provision) together with a record of whether the complaint refers to a day or boarding pupil, the action taken by the School (regardless as to whether or not the complaint was upheld) and whether these have been resolved following a formal procedure or have proceeded to a Panel meeting. The written record will indicate any complaints which are specific to boarding and those complaints made but later withdrawn. The Complaints Log also states the action taken by the School as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they have been upheld. The Complaints Log also includes all serious concerns in which the Head has been involved. The School will also keep a record of complaints relating to boarding provision which were made but later withdrawn and keeps under review any emerging patterns arising from complaints.

8.2 At the Senior School, the Complaints Log is kept in the Head's Office.

8.3 At the Preparatory School, the Complaints Log is kept in the Head's Office.

8.4 The Complaints Log at each School shall be reviewed by the Head regularly and not less than on a termly basis and by the Chair of Governors periodically.

8.5 In addition, the Deputy Heads, Assistant Heads and Heads of Phase in the Preparatory School keep a log of concerns and informal complaints raised with them, and which they have dealt with informally.

8.6 The School processes data in accordance with its Privacy Notices https://www.felsted.org/parents/policies-school-information. When dealing with complaints the School (including any Panel member appointed under the Stage 3 process) may process a range of information, which is likely to include:

- Date when the issue was raised;
- Personal identifiers - name of parent and pupil, their addresses and contact details. This may also include the name and contact details of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each Stage;
- Description of the issue;
- Any relevant information the School holds on its systems and databases
- Any information provided by the parent about the complaint or provided to the School by any other organisation
- Records of all the investigations and any witness statements (if appropriate);
- Copies of relevant correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations);
- Notes and minutes of meetings and the Stage 3 Panel meeting; and
- The Panel's written decision.

This may include 'special category personal data' (as further detailed in the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy, but potentially including, for instance, information relating to physical or mental health) where this is necessary owing to the nature of the complaint. This data will be processed in accordance with the School's Privacy Notice, Data Protection Policy and Record Keeping Policy. The record of complaint is kept for at least 7 years and may be kept for longer subject to

further consideration by the Head or if there is a safeguarding aspect to the complaint.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

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 Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them, or under other legal authority. In addition to where requested by the Secretary of State or an inspector, there may be other circumstances where disclosure of the substance of a complaint or particular confidential records relating to it is required, for example, where there is a legal, regulatory, safeguarding or data protection obligation (eg, in response to a subject access request) which prevails over the requirement to maintain the records as confidential.

10. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)

Where the School is unable to resolve a complaint with a parent and this Procedure has been exhausted, the School will let parents know that if they cannot settle the complaint parents may, if they wish, contact the Ombudsman Service as a means of alternative dispute resolution ("ADR"). In providing this information, the School will also indicate whether they are prepared to consider entering into ADR in that instance, as the School is not obliged to do so.

11. SERIAL, PERSISTENT AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

The decision of the Panel at Stage 3 of this Procedure is final. If parents attempt to reopen the same issue, or a closely related issue that has already been dealt with under this Procedure, the Chair of Governors may inform them in writing that the Procedure has been exhausted, the matter is now closed, that continued correspondence on the same matters will be viewed as 'serial' or 'persistent' and that the School will not respond to any further correspondence on this issue or closely related issue.

We will not normally limit the contact parents have with the School. However, the School does not expect staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The School adopts the Department for Education's definition of unreasonable complainants as those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the School, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints. Unreasonable complaints are taken seriously by the School as they put a strain on valuable resources and hinder the progress of proper investigations. The School may judge that a complaint is unreasonable by assessing a number of factors, including if a parent/complainant:

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the complaints procedure
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which they expect to be taken into account and commented on

- raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and to their own timescales
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed)
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the School's Complaints Procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education
- seeks an unrealistic outcome
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy and complicated contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with
- uses threats to intimidate
- uses abusive, offensive or discriminatory language or violence
- knowingly provides falsified information.
- publishes unacceptable information on social media or other public forums.

The School also reserves the right to pause or cease to deal with vexatious complaints. This will usually be where there are/is:

- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- Insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason;
- Insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- Demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value.

Parents should try to limit their communication with the School that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent (either by letter, phone, email or text), as it could delay the outcome being reached. Whenever possible, the Head or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the parent informally before applying an 'unreasonable' or 'vexatious' marking. If the behaviour continues, the Head will write to the parent explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable or 'vexatious' and ask them to change it. If this continues, we will follow the process set out in the School's Parent Code of Conduct. In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing and follow the process set out in the School's Parent Code of Conduct.

12. CONTACT DETAILS FOR ISI AND OFSTED

12.1 INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CAP House,
9 - 12 Long Lane,
London
EC1A 9HA
Tel: 020 7600 0100 Fax: 020 7776 8849
Email: concerns@isi.net

12.2 **OFSTED**
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

12.3 Parents of pupils who board may contact ISI in relation to any concern about the pupil's welfare.

12.4 Parents may contact either Ofsted or ISI if they have a concern that the School is not meeting the EYFS requirements.

13. COMPLAINTS IN 2025/26

In the school year 2025/26 the Heads' Office (Prep and Senior) at the School dealt with 1 formal complaint:

- Prep: 1 formal complaint (the complaint did not relate to boarding provision)
- Senior: 0 formal complaints

Appendix 1:

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PUPILS –

FELSTED SENIOR SCHOOL

This section is particularly addressed to pupils.

1. If you are unhappy, or worried about a problem or wish to make a complaint, you should talk to someone. That person might be:

IN SCHOOL:

- Your Housemaster, Housemistress or their assistants
- Your Tutor or another member of the teaching staff
- Beth Lewis (Independent Listener) - 01225 96955
- The School Doctors - via the Medical Centre or at Blandford Medical Centre - 01376 347100
- The Medical Centre - 01371 822791 or House Matron
- The Wellbeing Centre, wellbeing@felsted.org or 01371 822673
- The Senior Deputy Head, either directly by email - dhpa@felsted.org or by making an appointment through their PA - 01371 822708
- The Head, either directly by email - hmpa@felsted.org or by making an appointment through their PA - 01371 822606

OR IT MIGHT BE, OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL:

- Your parents
- Frank Drugs Helpline (tel: 03001236600)
- Childline (tel: 0800 1111)
- Office of the Children's Commissioner – 0207 783 8330
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

  www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ (online contact form)

2. Do not be afraid to speak if you have a concern or complaint about your or someone else's welfare

2.1 Everyone at the School is concerned about your welfare and there is always help available. If you have any concern it is much better to say something than it is to stay silent.

2.2 You can contact any of the people listed above as a first step.

3. Key principles

3.1 A written record is kept of all complaints and their outcome, for regular review by the Head or a senior member of staff.

3.2 If you have a concern or complaint, you can always speak to your parents and ask them to contact someone at the School on your behalf, unless circumstances make this impossible, when you could raise the complaint yourself.

3.3 If you want to raise a concern or complaint yourself, it is best to start with the person who is most concerned with that area of school life or who is most likely to be able to help. For example:

- A House matter, speak to your Housemaster or Housemistress
- Academic work, speak to the Academic Office.
- Pastoral, bullying, welfare, or well-being, speak to your Housemaster or Housemistress, the Wellbeing Centre, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Deputy Heads or the Head.
- Behaviour or actions of a member of staff, speak to a senior member of staff – a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Deputy Heads or the Head.

3.4 If your complaint relates to boarding provision, please see below. The process is also set out on your House Notice Board.

3.5 Complaints will be resolved either to the satisfaction of the person complaining, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils.

3.6 If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how it is proposed to proceed.

3.7 If the person you contact needs to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding, then you will be given a date not more than 15 working days later by which time you will receive a response.

3.8 Pupils (including Boarders who complain about boarding provision) are NOT thought less of, punished or penalised in any way for making a complaint in good faith.

3.9 Parents may make a complaint against the School as explained in the main Complaints Policy and Procedure.

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PUPILS

– FELSTED PREPARATORY SCHOOL

This section is particularly addressed to pupils.

1. If you are unhappy, or worried about a problem or wish to make a complaint, you should talk to someone. That person might be:

IN SCHOOL:

- Your Form Tutor, Head of Phase, Boarding House staff (07788 319002) or another member of the teaching staff
- The Medical Centre - 01371 822791
- The Deputy Head, prepltsec@felsted.org , Tel: 01371 822614 or in their office in the Evans Block
- The Head, hmsprep@felsted.org, Tel 01371 822612, either knock on the door or make an appointment with their PA – 01371 822612
- Beth Lewis (Independent Listener) - 01225 969558
- Sharing/Caring Box in each Phase with Comment/Suggestion/Ideas Boxes in Hamilton House for Boarders.

OR IT MIGHT BE, OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL:

- Your parents
- Frank Drugs Helpline (tel: 03001296600)
- Childline (tel: 0800 1111)
- Office of the Children's Commissioner - 0207 783 8330
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

  www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ (online contact form)

2. Do not be afraid to speak if you have a concern or complaint about your or someone else's welfare.

2.1 Everyone at the School is concerned about your welfare and there is always help available. If you have any concern it is much better to say something than it is to stay silent.

2.2 You can contact any of the people listed above as a first step.

3. Key principles

3.1 A written record is kept of all concerns and complaints and their outcome, for regular review by the Head.

3.2 If you have a concern or complaint, you can always speak to your parents and ask them to contact someone at the School on your behalf, unless circumstances make this impossible, when you could raise the complaint yourself.

3.3 If you want to raise a concern or complaint yourself, it is best to start with your Form Tutor or Head of Phase.

3.4 if your complaint relates to the behaviour or actions of a member of staff - speak to a member of the Leadership Team, the Deputy Head or the Head.

3.5 If your complaint relates to boarding provision, please see below. The process is also set out on your House Notice Board.

3.6 Complaints will be resolved either to the satisfaction of the person complaining, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils.

3.7 If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days to respond to your concerns and explain how it is proposed to proceed.

3.8 If the person you contact needs to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding, then you will be given a date not more than 15 working days later by which time you will receive a response.

3.9 Pupils (including Boarders who complain about boarding provision) will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way where a complaint is made in good faith.

3.10 Parents may make a complaint against the School as explained in the main Complaints Policy and Procedure.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT BOARDING PROVISION

1.1 Concerns and complaints from parents concerning boarding provision are managed in accordance with this Policy.

1.2 If a boarder has a concern or complaint about boarding provision, they should refer to the School's Complaints Procedure for Boarders, which can be found on the House Notice Board.

1.3 Boarders should always feel they are able to raise a concern and that it will be taken seriously. If a boarder has a concern or complaint about boarding provision, they should refer to their Housemaster, Housemistress, Houseparent or their assistants in the first instance either by talking to the member of staff, or in writing (including by email). All concerns and complaints are taken seriously. The member of staff will seek to deal with the concern or complaint quickly and informally. If the member of staff who receives the concern or complaint cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for a senior member of staff to be consulted.

1.4 If the matter is not resolved informally, the boarder may refer the matter to the Head setting out briefly the facts of their concern or complaint and stating what it is that the boarder considers should be done. The Head may delegate the handling of the matter to another senior member of staff who has not previously been involved. The Head (or senior member of staff) dealing with the matter may meet with the boarder, if they deem it appropriate.

1.5 Whenever reasonably possible, the Head (or senior member of staff) will respond to the boarder with the outcome of their concern or complaint within 20 working days of having received the boarder's formal complaint. Working days for this purpose is Monday-Friday during school term time. If the Head (or senior member of staff) is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the boarder with an update and revised response time. Following the Head's (or senior member of staff's) response, the boarder will have no further recourse to their concern or complaint. A boarder will not have access to the Complaints Procedure above as this is designated for parents.

1.6 Boarders will not be penalised for raising a concern or complaint about boarding provision in good faith.

1.7 A record will be kept of all concerns and complaints raised by a boarder relating to boarding provision and the date on which they were received. The records, including any action taken, will be regularly reviewed by the Head.