



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

COMPLAINTS POLICY

AUGUST 2021

Registered address: 46 Floral Street • Covent Garden • London WC2E 9DA

www.royalballetschool.org.uk

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COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

The Royal Ballet School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School with consideration and in accordance with this Complaints Procedure. The Royal Ballet School makes its Complaints Procedure available to all parents of students and of prospective students on the School's website, and The Royal Ballet School will ensure that parents of students and of prospective students who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and of the form in which it is published or available.

In accordance with paragraph 32(1)(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, **The Royal Ballet School will make available to parents of students and of prospective students and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), details of the complaint's procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.**

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. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the School has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done or 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.

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 five working term days if received close to, or during a school holiday. 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 15 working days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and 15 working term days if lodged close to, or during a school holiday.

Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, the panel will be convened within 20 working days with the aim to hold the hearing as soon as is practically possible thereafter. If the appeal is lodged close to, or during a school holiday the 20 days will be term working days

These meetings will be held virtually in the current circumstances.

**for the purpose of this policy working days refers to Monday to Friday inclusively*

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 student
- 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)
- Notes of the hearing
- The panel's written decision

This may include 'special category personal data' (as further detailed in the School's Privacy Notice, but potentially including sensitive data such as information relating to physical or mental health) where this is necessary owing to the nature of the complaint.

The School will keep records of formal complaints and Complaints Panel hearings, as required by regulation. It will do so in accordance with its Privacy Notice but in most cases for a period of at least six years after the pupil leaves the School.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will 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.

The Senior Leadership Team reviews complaints termly.

THREE STAGE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1 - Informal raising and resolution of concerns

- a. It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- b. If parents have a concern they should normally contact their son/daughter's Housemaster(mistress) / relevant academic or artistic teacher/ Academic Tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Housemaster(mistress) / relevant academic or artistic teacher/ Academic Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for him/her to consult the relevant Artistic Programme Manager, Senior Teacher or Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare).
- c. Concerns made directly to the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal will usually be referred to the relevant Housemaster(mistress) / relevant academic or artistic teacher/ Academic Tutor unless Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal Headmaster deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- d. The Housemaster(mistress) / relevant academic or artistic teacher/ Academic Tutor 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 ten days or in the event that the House Parent / relevant academic or artistic teacher/ Academic Tutor and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

- e. If, however, the complaint is against the Artistic Director and/or Academic & Pastoral Principal, parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 2- Formal making and resolution of complaints

- a. If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing, stating that they are invoking Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.
 - i. if the complaint concerns dance or a wider question of school policy or procedure, the complaint should be addressed to the Artistic Director
 - ii. if the complaint concerns an academic or pastoral matter the complaint should be addressed to the Academic & Pastoral Principal
- b. In most cases, the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal will meet the parents concerned, within 10 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- c. It may be necessary for the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal to carry out further investigations.
- d. The Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- e. Once the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal will also give reasons for his / her decision.
- f. If the complaint is against the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal, the Chair of Governors, or their nominee, will call for a full report from the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal and for all the relevant documents. The Chair, or their nominee, may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to or meet with the parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair, or their nominee, is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair, or their nominee, will give reasons for his / her decision.
- g. If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

- a. Parents may invoke stage 3 of the complaints procedure by writing to the Chair of Governors (contact details can be found at the end of this policy) within 10 working days of receipt of the Stage 2 written response.
- b. The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the School. The

Chief Operating Officer (COO), on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and convene a panel within 20 working days. The hearing will take place as soon as is practically possible thereafter.

- c. 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 3 working days prior to the hearing.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will make findings and may make recommendations.
- g. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it, within 5 working days of the hearing (although additional time may be required if it is necessary to carry out further investigations following 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 as well as the Chair of Governors and the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal. A copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations (if any) will also be available for inspection on the School premises by the Chair of Governors and the Artistic Director / Academic & Pastoral Principal.

In the 3 years to 1 August 2020 the School has received 1 formal complaint.

CONTACTS

Contact details

All contact details are available in the relevant School Handbooks, via Front of House at both sites and on the School website.

Chair of Governors

Christopher Rodrigues CBE

The Royal Ballet School, 46 Floral Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DA

e-mail: c/o the Clerk to the Governors: pippa.adamson@royalballetschool.org.uk

Tel: c/o Pippa Adamson (Clerk to the Governors) 0207 836 8899 Fax: 0207 845 7080

Artistic Director

Mr Christopher Powney

The Royal Ballet School, 46 Floral Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DA

e-mail: christopher.powney@royalballetschool.org.uk

Tel: 0207 836 8899 Fax: 0207 845 7080

Academic & Pastoral Principal

Mr David Gajadharsingh

The Royal Ballet School, 46 Floral Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DA

e-mail: david.gajadharsingh@royalballetschool.org.uk

Tel: 0207 836 8899 Fax: 0207 845 7080

Inspectorates

Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI)

CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane

London EC1A 9HA

Telephone: 0207 600 0100

Fax: 0207 776 8849

The ISI number for whistleblowing i.e. raising concerns about child protection is:

020 7600 0100

The Children's Commissioner for England

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

General Advice

If parents or students are unsure about a situation or events, several organisations will speak in confidence to advise what would be the best thing to do:

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 (for adults concerned about a child)

Childline: 0800 1111 (for children)

Kidscape: 0207 730 3300 (for parents, children and staff)

Safeguarding and Child Protection

If parents or students are concerned that a student may be at risk of harm, please see the Safeguarding Policy for further advice.

Appendix A – Complaints Procedure Flowchart

