



Complaints Procedure for Current Pupils or Parents of Current Pupils

This policy is made available to parents and pupils on the College website. A hard copy can also be requested from the Deputy Clerk to Council¹.

Haileybury is committed to a continuous programme of rigorous self-evaluation in order to make the best possible provision for the pupils entrusted to our care. Parental feedback therefore is much to be welcomed. Where the College's policies, or the implementation of them, are open to criticism parents must be able to express a formal complaint without fear or favour.

Many concerns are addressed informally and they are dealt with entirely satisfactorily on that basis. Nothing in this document is intended to inhibit the informal free flow of information and comment between parents and the various responsibility holders within the College.

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Complaints Procedure for all Current Pupils

If you feel worried about something or if you wish to complain about how you are, or have been treated, there are various options available:

You may wish just to talk to someone OR you may wish to make an informal complaint OR you may wish to make a formal complaint.

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the College as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a pupil believes that the College has done something wrong, or failed to do something that it should have done, or acted unfairly. Pupils can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The College is here for you and you can be assured that you will not be penalised for a complaint that you raise in good faith.

You may wish just to talk to someone

Remember you have close friends who may be able to help, or just an older boy or girl to whom you may feel you can comfortably talk. Your HM is always ready to help, or your House tutor, or any member of staff you know.

There may be times when you feel you can't talk with a member of staff - this is perfectly all right and natural. Talk, telephone or write to any of the following:

- Your parents
- The College Doctor: 01992 706288 or by email k.parkinson@haileybury.com, or doctor@haileybury.com
- **The College's Independent Listener:**
- The School Counsellor: 01992 706241 or by email: l.othen-price@haileybury.com, or counsellor@haileybury.com
- The Chaplain: c.briggs@haileybury.com
- ChildLine 0800 11 11
- Office of the Children's Commissioner: 0800 528 0731

The College employs the services of an experienced, fully qualified and registered Child and Adolescent counsellor, Mrs Lindsey Othen-Price. Lindsey is accredited with the BACP (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists) and is available at Haileybury every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in term time usually between the hours of 12pm and 6pm to discuss, in confidence, matters of concern to pupils of all ages. She works within the Health Centre. Further details related to the counselling services offered at Haileybury can be found within the College's Counselling Policy.

Current pupils also have access to the services of an Independent Listener, Mrs Cheryl Chalk, whom they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school. Mrs Chalk visits Haileybury in her capacity as an Independent Listener approximately 14 times a year (3 times each half term in the autumn term and 2 times in all other half terms). She can also be contacted using the details above if a current pupil requests a more immediate meeting.

What happens if I want to make an informal complaint about something?

Sometimes you may feel that you would like to make a complaint about something that is worrying you. This might be about how you are being treated. The first thing you should do is speak to any member of staff you can trust, such as your tutor or your HM. You can take a friend with you if you wish - another pupil, an older pupil or another member of staff.

It is particularly important for you to realise that in the event that you are in trouble over something, you can have your tutor or a friend with you when you are talking with your HM, the Deputy Master or the Master.

If the matter can't be easily settled to your satisfaction, then you can make a formal complaint.

Formal complaints procedure for current pupils

To do this you will need to write to your HM, the Deputy Master or the Master explaining that you wish to make a formal complaint. You will get a note in reply saying the complaint has been recorded and that it will be attended to. This reply will normally be acknowledged and discussed within three teaching days of its receipt in term time (in holiday and half term periods within 2

weeks). You will then be asked to talk the matter through with either the Deputy Master or the Master; you can have a friend with you, who may be another pupil, your tutor or your HM or any member of staff.

If within two more days (assuming holidays/weekends do not fall within this time) you have not had the matter satisfactorily sorted out you may contact any of the people listed on page 2. You do not have to inform staff or anyone else that you are complaining about them. You will not be penalized in any way for making a complaint in good faith.

Complaints Procedure for Parents of Current Pupils

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the College 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 College has done something wrong, or failed to do 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 College is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you raise in good faith.

What constitutes a parent of a current pupil?

A parent of a current pupil is one whose child is a current registered pupil attending Haileybury. Once a child has left Haileybury the child is no longer a current pupil. A parent whose child has left Haileybury may escalate a complaint that they have already registered informally or at any formal stage, but cannot initiate a new complaint. This policy should not be used to appeal exclusions; there is an alternative process for this.

Haileybury operates a three-stage process for complaints:

Stage One (Informal Complaint)

Most complaints or concerns can usually be addressed informally, and entirely satisfactorily, through discussion with the appropriate member of staff. As Haileybury operates on a House system the first port of call for most issues related to your daughter or son's academic and social wellbeing should be their Housemistress or Housemaster. For those in Lower School the first port of call should be the Head of Lower School.

An informal complaint can initially be made in writing, via the telephone or in person to the Housemaster or Housemistress or the Head of Lower School. Depending on the nature of the concern/complaint, they may suggest that another member of College staff might be better placed to deal with it (see page 5 for examples). If this is the case, the Housemaster, Housemistress or Head of Lower School will convey this within their initial response. Whether the informal complaint is made in writing, in person or via the telephone, the relevant Housemaster / Housemistress / Head of Lower School will acknowledge the complaint within three teaching days of its receipt in term time (in holiday and half term periods, within two weeks).

The responsibility holder will inform the Deputy Master or relevant Deputy Head who line manages them (via email to file@haileybury.com), on receipt of an informal complaint and where the complaint is made verbally, the relevant member of staff will also include a note of the contents of any discussions. The responsibility holder having duly considered the issue, and acted on it, at his or her discretion will then notify the parent in writing, normally within one month of receiving the complaint (in term time, and within one month of the start of the next academic half term if it is a holiday period), confirming that the matter has been investigated and explaining what action has been taken in light of the concern.

Responsibility Holders:

If your complaint is related to:

Your child's Housemaster/Housemistress, the College's disciplinary arrangements or the pastoral support of the College

The pastoral support of a tutor or the arrangements in house

The teaching in an academic department

The Head of an Academic Department or the College's Academic Policy

Sport Provision

Co-curricular Music Provision

Co-curricular Drama Provision

Please contact:

The Deputy Master: s.heard@haileybury.com

The Housemaster/Housemistress of your child's house
OR the Head of Lower School

The relevant Head of Department

The Deputy Head (Academic):
s.campbell@haileybury.com

The Director of Sport: a.searson@haileybury.com

The Director of Music: a.obrien@haileybury.com

The Director of Drama: j.thomas@haileybury.com

The Directors of Sport/Music/Drama or any other issues relating to the College's co-curricular provision

The Deputy Head (Co-Curricular):
a.head@haileybury.com

If your complaint is to do with the Master, Bursar, Deputy Master or the Deputy Heads parents should go straight to Stage Two (Formal), below.

If the parent remains dissatisfied with the response provided to the informal complaint the next step is to pursue a formal complaint under Stage Two (see below).

Stage Two (Formal Complaint)

If a parent wishes to complain about the Deputy Master or the Deputy Heads or if the parent remains dissatisfied following Stage One of the process he or she should next approach either the Master or the Bursar as appropriate and formalise the complaint. The division of responsibility at Haileybury is as follows:

The Master	all matters to do with pupils' education including discipline, co-curricular and pastoral care.
The Bursar	financial matters, buildings, grounds and equipment, Health and Safety and domestic issues.

The Master and the Bursar consult regularly, particularly when their areas of responsibility overlap. A formal complaint to the Master or the Bursar should commence with the parent briefly setting out in writing the concern together with a statement as to why it is believed that the investigation and/or action taken at the previous stage was unsatisfactory.

The Master or the Bursar will respond within three teaching days to acknowledge receipt (in holiday and half term periods within two weeks), then investigate the matter further and independently of conclusions arrived at an earlier stage. The outcome of their investigation will be communicated to parents in writing usually within one month of the matter coming to their attention (in term time, and within one month of the start of the next academic half term if it is a holiday period). They will also communicate the rationale behind their decision and action.

This communication may also involve a face to face meeting, but this will not be the case on every occasion.

Stage Three (Formal complaint to a panel appointed by the Council)

If parents remain dissatisfied following Stage Two of this complaints procedure then they should bring their concern to the attention of the Council of the Governing Body. Access to the Council is through the Deputy Clerk to the Council². The Deputy Clerk will inform the Chair of Council that a complaint has been raised.

If parents wish to make a complaint about the Master or the Bursar they should contact the Deputy Clerk to Council as above.

Council will ordinarily appoint three members as a panel to review and resolve the complaint. Panel members appointed would have had no direct involvement in the matters detailed in the complaint. One of the three panel members shall be independent of the management and the running of the College; as per DfE guidelines this person will be someone who has held a position of responsibility and is used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments. The panel hearing will allow for a parent to attend and be accompanied if they wish. The panel will make findings and recommendations.

The panel hearing should proceed even if the parent may subsequently decide not to attend yet has not withdrawn the complaint. In this case the panel should consider the parent's complaint in his/her absence and issue findings on the substance of the parent's complaint thereby bringing the matter to a conclusion. The panel should seek to accommodate parental availability for dates and consider parental comments concerning panel composition, but the Haileybury Council has the final say on the composition of the panel.

The Deputy Clerk to Council will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within one week (in holiday and half term periods within two weeks) and communicate the final decision of the investigation or panel hearing to the various parties, usually within one month of the matter being raised with Council (in term time, and within one month of the start of the next academic half term if it is a holiday period).

Where possible within the bounds of confidentiality and privacy, a copy of the findings will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy of the findings will be available for inspection on the College premises by the Council and the Master.

² Mrs Catrin Mills + 44 (0)1992 706497 c.mills@haileybury.com

External Agencies

Where the College's internal procedures have been followed and a parent remains dissatisfied, the ISI may be contacted. ISI inspects all aspects of independent school education and its contact information is as follows: telephone 020 7600 0100 or email concerns@isi.net.

If your complaint relates to the way a safeguarding or child protection matter you raised was handled and you are concerned that it may constitute a potential failure of our Safeguarding Policy, this complaint should be referred to the local safeguarding panel: Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) <http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk/>.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): From 1 October 2015, under EU regulation, ADR applies to all contracts for services and the College's contracts with parents therefore fall within its scope. ADR takes effect when the College's internal complaint-handling procedures detailed above in Stages 1 – 3, are exhausted without resolution of the matter.

In this unlikely eventuality, the College is required to provide parents in writing with the following: an appropriate statement to the effect that the College is unable to settle the parental complaint and the name and website address of an ADR provider that could deal with the complaint, if the parent wishes to use ADR. However, parents are advised that Haileybury is not required to be bound by an ADR procedure.

Complaint Record Keeping

The College will keep a confidential, written record of all complaints, the stage at which they are resolved and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

- Teaching staff should be aware of the College's Policy on Complaint Record Keeping and note that if a complaint is raised via telephone / in person regarding a school-related issue, the member of staff receiving the concern must follow the procedure set out under Stage 1 above. A record of all formal complaints (i.e. Stages 2 and 3) and the stage at which they are resolved will be kept by the Deputy Clerk to the Council. All correspondence must be copied to the Deputy Clerk to Council when received or sent, at the email address above. Records of formal complaints are available to the Council at any stage.
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be held with these records but kept confidential except to the extent required under paragraph 33(k) of Part 7, Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

The number of formal stage two and three complaints for the preceding academic year should be recorded on this policy. *Haileybury received four formal complaints from parents of current pupils during the academic year 2017-18.*

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