



Rugby School
THAILAND

Parental Complaints Policy

Person Responsible: Deputy Head Pastoral, Senior
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The health, safety and well-being of young people are of paramount importance to all the adults who work at Rugby School Thailand. Children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. Members of staff in the school have a legal and moral obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils, taking all reasonable steps to protect them from harm whether from physical injury, abuse, neglect, emotional harm or from anything that interferes with their general development.

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Purpose of the Policy

Policy status: This policy has been approved by the Heads of School and the Governing Body of Rugby School Thailand. It provides guidelines for handling complaints and takes account of paragraph 33 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/3283). The policy will be reviewed annually.

Application: In this policy, "parents" / "you" includes a current parent or legal guardian or education guardian, and may at our discretion include a parent whose child has recently left the School. This policy applies to all complaints other than those relating to Child Protection issues or where the Heads of School make a decision that a pupil be required to leave the School and the parents seek a review by the RST Executive Committee (RST Strategic Committee from 2021). Separate procedures apply to each of these exceptional cases.

Timescales: We aim to resolve any complaints in a timely manner.

Timescales for each stage of the Complaints Procedure are set out below in the relevant paragraphs. For the purposes of this policy, a "working day" is defined as a weekday during term time, when the School is open and there are lessons being taught. The definition of "working day" excludes weekends and Thai National Holidays. For the avoidance of doubt, term dates are published on the School's website and in the Calendar, and information about term dates is made available to parents and pupils periodically.

Policy aim and statement:

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a complaint by a parent is managed sympathetically, efficiently and at the appropriate level and resolved as soon as possible. Doing so is good practice, it is fair to those concerned and it helps to promote parents' and pupils' confidence in our ability to safeguard and promote welfare. We will try to resolve every complaint in a positive way with the aim of putting right a matter which may have gone wrong and, where necessary, reviewing our systems and procedures in the light of circumstances.

Policy statement:

We need to know as soon as possible if there is any cause for dissatisfaction. We recognise that a difficulty which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment, which could be damaging to relationships and also to our school culture. We intend that parents and pupils should never feel – or be made to feel – that a complaint will be taken amiss or will adversely affect a pupil or his/her opportunities at school.

Stage 1: Complaints and difficulties

1. Complaints

We expect that most complaints, where a parent seeks intervention, reconsideration or some other action to be taken, can be resolved informally. Examples might include dissatisfaction about some aspect of teaching or pastoral care, or about allocation of privileges or responsibilities, or about a timetable clash or some other aspect of the School's systems or equipment, or a billing error

2. Notification

Please raise the complaint initially as follows:

2.1 Educational issues – if the matter relates to the classroom, the curriculum or special educational needs, please speak or write, as appropriate, to:

Pre-Prep: Class Teacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head

Prep: Class Teacher / Form Tutor, Head of Department, Deputy Head Academic

Senior: Tutor, Head of Department, or House Dean.

2.2 Pastoral care – for complaints relating to matters outside the classroom or in the House, please speak or write, as appropriate, to:

Pre-Prep: Class Teacher, Assistant Head

Prep: Class Teacher / Form Tutor, House Parent (boarders), Deputy Head Pastoral

Senior: Tutor or House Dean.

2.3 Disciplinary matters – a problem over any disciplinary action taken or a sanction imposed should be raised first of all with the member of staff who imposed it then, if not resolved, with

Pre-Prep: Deputy Head, Head of Prep

Prep: Deputy Head Pastoral

Senior: House Dean.

2.4 Financial and administrative matters – a query relating to fees or extras or to other administrative matters should be raised either with the Chief Financial Officer.

2.5 Admissions matters - any complaints relating to admissions should be raised with the Head of Admissions.

2.6 Should an informal complaint be raised with a member of staff other than those designated at item 2.1 to 2.5 above, he or she is asked to redirect it to the appropriate individual under this policy.

2.7 Welfare of boarders: boarders are provided with appropriate helplines which they can ring in case of problems or distress. These include Childline Thailand, telephone 1387 24 hours, or email info@childlinethailand.org; the Office of Child Protection, telephone 02-214-60301/081-930-3419 24 hours. The Department of Children and Youth <http://www.dcy.go.th/webnew/main/index.php> can also be contacted.

Makkasan Office: 618/1 Nikhom Makkasan Road, Rajthevi District, Bangkok 10400
Telephone: 0 2255 5850-7, 0 2253 9116-7 (automatic); Fax: 0 2651 6483

3. Acknowledgement

A written notification of a complaint will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing within two working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable in the holidays. A matter raised orally will not necessarily be acknowledged in writing but will be recorded by the person dealing with the matter.

4. Unresolved complaints

A complaint which has not been resolved by informal means within fifteen working days from the receipt of the complaint can be notified as a formal complaint in accordance with Stage 2 below.

Stage 2: Formal complaints

1. Notification

An unresolved complaint under Stage 1, or a complaint which needs investigation, or a more serious dissatisfaction with some aspect of the School's policies, procedures, management or administration should be set out in writing with full details and sent with all relevant documents and your full contact details for the attention of the relevant Head of School, or the COO and Clerk to the Governors, as appropriate. Should a formal written complaint be received by another member of the School's staff, he or she will immediately pass it to the Head of School, or the COO as appropriate.

2. Acknowledgement

Your complaint will be acknowledged by telephone or in writing normally within five working days of receipt during term time and as soon as practicable during the holidays. The acknowledgement will indicate the action that is being taken and the likely timescale for resolution.

3. Investigation and resolution

The Heads of School, or COO may deal with the matter personally or may ask a senior member of staff or an appointed independent person to act as "investigator" and/or may involve one or more Governors. The investigator may request additional information from you and will probably wish to speak to you personally and to others who have knowledge of the circumstances, and will prepare a

report on the investigation. Following appropriate investigation, the Head of School, or COO will then notify you in writing of the decision and the reasons for it.

4. Outcome

The aim of the relevant Head of School, or the COO would be to inform any complainant of the outcome of an investigation and the resolution to the complaint within one calendar month from the receipt of the complaint. Please note that any complaint received during a School vacation or within one month of the end of term or half term is likely to take longer to resolve owing to the presence of school holidays and the unavailability of personnel.

5. Record of complaints

The relevant Head of School, and the COO are responsible for keeping a log of all complaints received by or referred to them under this stage of the procedure. The log should provide a brief written summary of the name of the complainant, the date the complaint was received, the matter complained of, and the manner and date of its resolution. Written records will also be kept of any meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the Head of School, or the COO under Stage 2, the parents can request that the complaint be referred to the Complaints Panel under Stage 3.

A standing agenda item at SMT meeting will be 'Complaints', and an update of any complaints and the progress being made to resolve them will be discussed.

Stage 3: Reference to the Review Panel:

1. Role of the Review Panel

The Panel's task is to establish the facts surrounding the complaints that have been made by considering: the documents provided by both parties and any representations made by you, the Head of School, or the COO, as appropriate and to reach a decision as to whether each complaint is made out in whole or in part. If the Panel considers that the complaint is not made out, they will dismiss the complaint. They will make these decisions on the balance of probabilities. It is not within the powers of the Panel to make any financial award, nor to impose sanctions on staff, pupils or parents. The Panel may make recommendations on these or any other issues to the Head of School or to the full body of Governors as appropriate.

2. Notification

Only if you have been through the earlier stages of this procedure, and are dissatisfied with the decision that has been notified to you by the relevant Head of School, or the COO may you request a final hearing by a Review Panel. To request a hearing before the Review Panel, please write to the Clerk to the Governors within five working days of the decision about which you complained. Your request will

only be considered if you have completed the relevant procedures at Stages 1 and 2. Please ensure that copies of all relevant documents accompany your letter to the Clerk, and state all the grounds for your complaint and the outcome that you desire. The Clerk will acknowledge your request in writing within five working days.

3. Review Panel

The review will be undertaken by a panel of at least three members appointed on behalf of the Governing Body and selected by the Clerk to the Governing Body. The Panel members will have no detailed previous knowledge of the case, will not include the Chairman of Governors, and one member will be independent of the management and running of the School. Fair consideration will be given to any bona fide objection to a particular member of the Panel.

4. Convening the Panel

The Clerk to the Governors will convene the Review Panel as soon as is reasonably practicable but the Panel will not normally sit during School holidays.

5. Notice of hearing

Every effort will be made to enable the Panel hearing to take place within 15 working days of the receipt of your request. As soon as reasonably practical and in any event at least five working days before the hearing, the Clerk will send you written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, together with brief details of the Panel members who will be present.

6. Attendance

You will be asked to attend the hearing and may be accompanied by one other person such as a relative, teacher, or friend. The Panel hearing is not legal proceedings and so legal representation is not necessary. If you do wish to be accompanied by a legally qualified person, please notify the School at least five working days before the hearing and note that the Panel will wish to speak to you directly and this person will not be permitted to act as an advocate. The Clerk to the Governors or his nominated deputy will also attend the hearing in order to keep a record of the proceedings. Copies of additional documents you wish the Panel to consider should be sent to the Clerk at least five working days prior to the hearing. The Clerk will circulate a copy of the bundle of documents to be considered by the Panel to all parties at least three days prior to the hearing. The Chairman of the Review Panel will conduct the hearing in such a way as to ensure that all those present have the opportunity of asking questions and making comments in an appropriate manner. The hearing is not a legal proceeding and the Panel shall be under no obligation to hear oral evidence from witnesses but may do so and/or may take written statements into account.

7. Adjournment

The Chairman may at his/her discretion adjourn the hearing for further investigation of any relevant issue. This may include an adjournment to take legal advice.

8. Decision

After due consideration of the matters discussed at the hearing, the Panel shall reach a decision unless there is an agreed position. The Panel's decision, findings and any recommendations shall be confirmed in writing to the complainant and the subject of the complaint by electronic mail where appropriate within ten working days. If these persons do not wish to receive the decision by electronic mail, a copy will be given or posted to them. The decisions, findings and any recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governing Body and the Heads of School.

9. Confidentiality

A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, and of whether they are resolved at Stage 2 or proceed to a panel hearing. The record will also include action taken by the School as a result of the complaint. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year will be supplied to parents on request. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where a court order or a body conducting an inspection requests access to them. In accordance with data protection principles, details of individual complaints will normally be retained only for as long as is considered to be reasonably necessary in the circumstances.

Authorised Compliance Committee:
Date: