

SECURING VIEWS & COMPLAINTS

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This document exists in conjunction with the Whole School **Complaints Policy**, which can be found on the School website.

It is vital that boarders feel that they have a voice and that their views are heard, taken seriously and acted upon. This is a key element of the excellent pastoral care that boarders at Underwood Hall receive and it is realised that feeling that one's voice is heard is a source of feeling valued and of self-esteem. There is an additional significant factor in that Underwood Hall is a brand new house and there is a significant opportunity for boarders to feel that they have a voice in shaping every element of life in Underwood Hall.

Boarders are encouraged by staff to offer their views and it is considered a vital aspect of the pastoral care that we offer. These views might be concerns, ideas, suggestions, anxieties or opinions. Boarders should be able to present their views both privately, confidentially and publicly as appropriate in a way that does not necessarily constitute a formal complaint but does require action. This policy outlines the procedures for expressing a view as well as for making a formal complaint.

There are a number of people to whom boarders may talk with including any member of boarding staff, any member of school staff, the Headteacher, the Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) or the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads (ADSLs). There is also an Independent Person whose contact telephone numbers is clearly displayed on houses. In addition, the telephone numbers for Childline and the Office of Children's Commissioner are displayed.

There are a number of aspects of your life that you might need to talk about or which might give cause for expressing a concern or making a complaint. For example being teased, feeling lonely, being made to do something you do not like, you feel misunderstood, you have been spoken to unreasonably, you have been physically hurt, you are involved in illegal activity or know others who are, you feel unsafe or you are being unfairly treated.

Boarders should expect that:

- Any view to be listened to and a record made.
- They receive a response promptly. This response may only be verbal but it gives vital reassurance that their view is being given thought and consideration. It may of course be that further consultation and meeting time is required.
- They will be kept up to date with progress.
- They will receive an apology if an error or omission has been made.
- If appropriate, and if there are no issues of sensitivity and privacy, concerns, action taken and outcomes are shared publicly for both boarders and the wider community to see.

Relationships between boarding staff and boarders should be such that boarders feel that boarding staff are approachable and that they will make time and listen. A culture exists such that boarders have a voice and are heard and that their voice goes some way in shaping boarding and its future.

In order to achieve this, relevant boarding staff will ensure the following:

- Boarders know who they can talk to outside of school
- The independent Person is known by the boarding community.
- Underwood Hall has at least an area of notice board set aside on which recent ideas and actions, and questionnaire/survey results are displayed.
- The Head of Underwood Hall ensures that time is set aside to discuss ideas and concerns with the whole house (or a designated House Committee) in order that boarders' views are actively sought.
- Boarders complete questionnaires/surveys in which they are able to offer their views freely.

- The results of such questionnaires/surveys are clearly displayed with any action or follow up clearly stated.
- There are other informal forums through which boarders can offer their views e.g. suggestion box (called the Voice Box), one-to-one check ins.
- Boarders are frequently encouraged to express their views, both verbally and by prominent signage through the houses.
- Whilst boarders are fully entitled to give their views anonymously, it is made clear to boarders that this may hinder the effectiveness with which a particular view may be dealt with. Therefore, boarders are strongly encouraged to be open when presenting their views.

FOR BOARDERS WISHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SOMEONE (INCLUDING A STAFF MEMBER OR OTHER ADULTS) OR SOMETHING IN BOARDING

An 'easy-to-read' version of the below is on display in Boarding Houses (also see Appendix 1) :

If you wish to make a formal complaint about something or someone in boarding then below outlines the procedure that must be followed:

- Tell the Head of Underwood Hall or any of the other staff members in Underwood Hall.
- Arrange to meet with the Head of Underwood Hall or any of the other staff members in Underwood Hall.
- You may be interviewed and/or asked to write about the complaint especially if an issue needs to be investigated further.
- If your complaint is about the Head of Underwood Hall, then you should direct your complaint to the Headteacher.
- When dealing with a complaint we will do our best to be quick, fair, thorough, honest, polite and respectful
- We will keep you up-to-date on any progress and explain what is going to be done as a result of your complaint.

The School will do its best to:

- Deal with your complaint honestly, politely and confidentially.
- Look at your complaint thoroughly and fairly.
- Deal quickly with your complaint.
- Keep you up to date with progress.
- Offer an apology if a mistake has been made.
- Explain what is going to be done as a result of the complaint being made.
- Work within the parameters and time frames as specified within the whole school **Complaints Policy**.

DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT?



If you wish to raise a concern or complain about something or someone in boarding (including a staff member or other adult) then below outlines the procedure that you should follow:

- Tell the Head of Underwood Hall or any of the other staff members in Underwood Hall.
- Arrange to meet with the Head of Underwood Hall or any of the other staff members in Underwood Hall.
- You may be interviewed and/or asked to write about the complaint especially if an issue needs to be investigated further.
- If your complaint is about the Head of Underwood Hall, then you should direct your complaint to the Headteacher.

When dealing with a complaint we will do our best to be:

**Quick | Fair | Thorough
Honest | Polite | Respectful**

We will keep you up-to-date on any progress and explain what is going to be done as a result of your complaint.

