



# Complaints Procedure

Reviewed: 01.10.2018 | Next date for review: 01,10.2019

## Complaints Procedure - Services for Schools

Running Deer C.I.C. prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. However, if parents or guardians do have a complaint, this guidance sets out the procedure that will be followed.

Our Complaints procedure is designed to:

- Encourage early resolution by informal means wherever possible.
- Be publicised and available.
- Have clear timescales at each stage of the proceedings which is relayed to the complainant.
- Respire confidentiality.
- Address the issues raised and provide an effective response and appropriate redress where necessary.
- Learn from the complaint so we can improve our services.

The complaints process is detailed below, along with the following information to be considered:

At any stage of the process, a parent may attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.

At each stage the person investigating the complaint will:

- Establish what happened and who was involved.
- Clarify the nature of the complaint.
- Meet with the complainant.
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.
- Conduct the interview with an open mind and thoroughly.
- Keep accurate minutes of the meeting.

## STAGE 1 - Information Resolutions



It is hoped that parents and guardians will raise any concerns or complaints informally to Running Deer as soon as they arise, so steps can be taken to address any issues. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away to the parent or guardians' satisfaction.

Initial concerns or complaints will be handled by a member of staff. A record of the complaint and the outcome, will be passed onto the Managing Director.

Should the matter not be resolved within three weeks or in the event that the member of staff and the parent/guardian fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then the parent or guardian will be advised to proceed with their complain in accordance with Stage 2.

## **STAGE 2 - Formal Resolutions**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the parent or guardian should put their complaint in writing to the Managing Director.

The Managing Director will decide the appropriate course of action to take. This will often involve meeting or contacting the parent or guardian concerned, within five working days of receiving the complaint to discuss the matter.

Where possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may also be necessary to carry out further investigations. Written records of all meetings and discussions held in relation to the complaint will be recorded.

Once the Managing Director is satisfied, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parent or guardian will be informed of this decision, in writing, within 20 working days of the receipt of the complaint. Reasons for the decision will be provided.

Please note that any complaint received within two weeks of the end of term is likely to take longer to resolve, an overall time frame of three months for resolution will be enforced.

If the parent or guardian is still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3.

## **STAGE 3 - Board of Directors Panel**

If a parent or guardian is still not satisfied, they should request that the Managing Director passes the complaint to the Running Deer Board of Directors. 2 members of the Board will be responsible for handling the complaint.



The Board will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days and proceed with further investigation. The Board will recommend solutions to the complainant within 10 working days from receipt of the complaint being passed to the Board.

It is hoped that the complaint will be resolved to the parent or guardian's satisfaction, however if this is not possible, the parent or guardian should proceed to Stage 4 of the procedure.

## **STAGE 4 - Appeal Panel**

The parent or guardian should indicate to the Board of Directors that they wish for their complaint to be heard at an Appeal Panel.

The Appeal Panel will be made up of 2 people: one director from the Running Deer C.I.C. board who has not been involved in the process and a person who is independent of the School and the organisation.

A meeting will take place with the Appeal Panel and the parent or guardian within 15 working days from the request to have the matter dealt with by an Appeal Panel. The hearing is as informal as possible but accurate minutes will be taken. Witnesses are only required to attend if they are to give evidence.

A panel member may ask questions of the complainant and any witnesses, and the complainant may also pose questions.

The decision of the Panel will be final. The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Decide on appropriate actions to resolve the complaint;
- Recommend changes to the organisational procedures to ensure the problem does not arise again.
- All parties will be informed of the outcomes of the Appeal Meeting.

### **Record Keeping**

A written record will be kept of all complaints, and whether they were resolved following at Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 or proceed to a panel hearing.

They will also include the action taken by Running Deer as a result of the complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). 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 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.



In the case of a panel hearing, the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Directors and the Managing Director.

### Confidentiality

All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. 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 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.

#### STEP 1

informal complaint – heard by member of staff

issue resolved | issue not resolved

#### STEP 2

complaint heard by managing director

after 3 weeks or if clear the situation cannot be informally resolved acknowledge receipt of complaint within 5 working days

contact complainant with resolution within 20 working days

issue resolved | issue not resolved

#### STEP 3

formal complaint made to the Board of Directors in writing board will carry out an investigation and:

acknowledge receipt of complaint within 3 working days contact complainant with solutions within 10 working days

issue resolved | issue not resolved

#### STEP 4

complaint to be heard by an Appeal Panel meeting to be held within 15 working days

all parties will be informed of the outcomes of the meeting



## Appendix A

### Running Deer Formal Complaints Form

Your Name:	
Young Person's Name:	
Your relationship to Young Person:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Day time phone number:	
Evening phone number:	
Please give details of your complaint:	
What actions, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken to and what was their response?):	



## Contact Running Deer

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