LAWRENCE SHERIFF SCHOOL RUGBY

A Teaching School Hub

COMPLAINTS POLICY FOR EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS

Last review date	Autumn Term 2025
Review period	Annual (SLT) and Triennial by Academic Strategy Committee
Next Review date	Autumn Term 2026
Reviewed by	Teresa Mpofu
Approving committee	Academic Strategy Committee
Policy type	Best practice
Other related policies	-

Our school aims to meet best practice standards when responding to complaints from someone who is not a parent of pupils at the school.

When responding to complaints, we aim to:

- ✓ Be impartial and non-adversarial.
- ✓ Address all the points at issue and provide an effective and prompt response.
- ✓ Respect complainants' desire for confidentiality.
- ✓ Treat complainants with respect and courtesy.
- ✓ Make sure that any decisions we make are lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, in line with the principles of administrative law.
- ✓ Consider how the complaint can feed into school improvement evaluation processes.

We try to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Where this is not possible, formal procedures will be followed.

The school will aim to give the complainant the opportunity to complete the complaints procedure in full. To support this, we will make sure we publicise the existence of this policy and make it available on the school website.

Throughout the process, we will be sensitive to the needs of all parties involved, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to accommodate individuals.

In the rare circumstances where someone who is not a parent or a carer of a pupil at the school feels they need to register a complaint, the following agreed procedure is in place.

1. All complaints must be submitted on the attached form (Appendix A) and marked "strictly private and confidential" for the attention of the PA to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will be

informed of the complaint and an appropriate member of staff will be nominated to carry out an investigation or, if appropriate, the Headteacher will investigate the complaint.

2. The matter will be investigated internally and an appropriate response made to the person concerned within twenty school days.

If at any point we cannot meet the time scales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant.
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay.

Please note:

- Any matter raised more than two months after the event being complained of will not be considered, except in exceptional circumstances (in the reasonable opinion of the school).
- Any anonymous complaints will not be investigated unless there are exceptional circumstances (in the reasonable opinion of the school).
- If a complaint relates to a disciplinary issue, there are no circumstances in which we will reveal the sanctions administered to others.
- If any complaint is vexatious and/or repetitive the school reserves the right to not investigate the complaint.

Very rarely, the school will feel that it needs, regretfully, to close a complaint where the complainant is still dissatisfied. We will do all we can to help resolve a complaint against the school but sometimes it is simply not possible to meet all of the complainant's wishes and it may be a case of 'agreeing to disagree'. If a complainant persists in making representations to the school this can be extremely time-consuming and can detract from our responsibility to look after the interests of all the children in our care. In such circumstances, we are entitled to close correspondence and other contacts on a complaint where we have taken all reasonable action to resolve the complaint.

In the event of a complainant believing that the school has failed to comply with its own complaints procedure or that the school's complaints procedure does not comply with statutory requirements, the complainant may complain to the Department for education. Details of how to do this may be found on the Department for Education website:

Complain about a school to the Department for Education - GOV.UK

APPENDIX A – External Complaints Form

Please note: this form should be submitted to the PA to the Headteacher marked 'Private and Confidential'.

Complainant's Name*	
Address of complainant	
Daytime telephone number	
Email address	
Please give details of your complaint	
Have you spoken to anyone at the school or exchanged any correspondence with the school prior to submitting this form? When was this and what was the response?	
Please indicate why you are dissatisfied with this response, if applicable.	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signed	
Date	

* Please note that the school does need to verify a complainant's identity before investigating any external complaints. Please provide documentary proof of identity with your form, eg a copy of your driving licence or passport, or a copy of a bank statement or utility bill (please ensure that all confidential/financial data is removed from the document before attaching it to this form). Thank you.