Durlston School 1.14 Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 At Durlston, we welcome regular contact with parents and view education as a partnership between home and school. It is hoped, therefore, that any concerns parents may have will be resolved quickly and informally.

1.2 If, however, parents do have reason to make a complaint, they can expect to be treated by the school in accordance with the following procedure:

2. The three-stage complaints procedure

2.1 Stage 1 Informal Resolution

- In the first instance, parents should normally expect to contact their child's form teacher. We hope that in many cases the matter will be resolved straight away by this means, to the parents' satisfaction. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, the form teacher may find it necessary to consult the Headmaster (or Head of Pre-Prep).
- Complaints made directly to the Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep may be referred to the relevant teacher, unless the Headmaster or Head of Pre-Prep deem it necessary to deal with the matter personally.
- A written record of all concerns and complaints will be made, together with the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 1 week, parents may proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

2.2 STAGE 2

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster.
- In most cases, the Headmaster will invite the parents to discuss the matter, within 2 days. A decision will be made and communicated to the parents in writing within 5 working days following this discussion.
- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings, interviews and action taken in relation to the complaint, which will be kept for a minimum of three years.
- If parents are not satisfied with the outcome, they may proceed to Stage 3.

2.3 STAGE 3

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, the matter will be referred to the Complaints Panel, consisting of at least 3 people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school and another would be the Governor responsible for Complaints. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chairman of Governors. A hearing will be scheduled to take place, normally within 14 days.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 2 days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person if notice is given one day in advance who will be attending. This may be a relative, teacher or friend.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- If further investigation is needed, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. A decision will be reached within 7 days of the Hearing, which will be no later than 28 days of the complaint having been made, and communicated to the parents in writing. The Panel's findings and recommendations will also be sent in writing to (and will be available for inspection on the school premises by) the Headmaster, the Board of Governors and, where relevant, the person about whom the complaint was made.

- The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings, interviews and action taken in relation to the complaint, which will be kept for a minimum of three years.

3. Recording Complaints and use of personal data

3.1 In compliance with GDPR a written record is kept of all complaints, which shows whether the complaint was resolved following a formal procedure (either stage 2 or 3), and what action was taken by the school as a result of the complaints, regardless of whether they were upheld

3.2 In considering the above. the school will investigate written complaints relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and notify complainants of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint.

- The record of complaints will be made available to OFSTED, who parents may contact with any concerns by telephone on 0300 123 4666. Further information is available from OFSTED on their website at -**https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted**

- The Independent Schools Inspectorate may be contacted by telephone on 020 7600 0100. Further information about how to deal with a concern or complaint is available on their website at **http://www.isi.net/contact**

3.3 Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially*.

- All 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 2008 Act requests access to them.

During the 2025-2026 Academic Year, the school received two complaints (at Level 2 or 3)

Reviewed by Board of Governors: June 2026

To be reviewed by the Board of Governors: June 2027