

PROCEDURE - PARENTS

The College has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be investigated and treated with appropriate seriousness by the College in accordance with this procedure.

Parents should note that there is a separate, but very similar, student version of this Complaints Procedure on Page 3 of this document. The visual diagram of the Complaints Policy (Students) is available in the Student Handbook handed to all new students as part of a “Welcome Pack” of documents given them on their arrival at the College. The student complaints procedure refers to an appeal procedure if they are not satisfied with the handling of their complaint once it has reached a formal stage. Students are then encouraged to involve their parents in contacting the Course Director and also enables an appeal to be made to the Trustees of the College - as set out in Stage 3 of the process outlined below under the heading of “Panel Hearing”. Please see further down this document in order to read the student version of our Complaints Procedure.

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a complaint they should normally contact an appropriate senior member of staff such as the Science Coordinator, Assistant Director of Studies, Director of Studies, Safeguarding Manager or the Assistant Course Directors. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the senior member of staff cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to investigate further and consult with other senior colleagues - such as the Course Director. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about a Senior Teacher, then the Course Director should be contacted since she will handle complaints about Senior Teachers herself.

The member of staff receiving the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. All staff dealing with complaints will make sure that the Course Director's office receives a record of any concerns raised by students and that the Assistant Course Directors are also informed. This in order to comply with new NMS (National Minimum Standards) for Boarding Schools which came into effect on 1st April 2015.

Should the matter not be resolved within 10 days, or in the event that the lead member of the senior staff dealing with the complaint and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

It should be noted that complaints at this stage can be in writing and that a written complaint does not automatically constitute a formal complaint. An informal complaint can take the form of an email or letter, phone call or face-to-face conversation.

Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Course Director. The Course Director will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Course Director will meet with or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 10 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Course Director to carry out further investigations.

The Course Director will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the Course Director is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Course Director will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 - Panel Hearing

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, who has been appointed by the Trustees to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by The Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 20 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 5 days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher, friend or representative.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Course Director, the Trustees and, where relevant, the person complained of.

If Parents are still not happy with the outcome, they can contact English UK (see the [Students Complaints Information Sheet](#) produced by English UK for further details).

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the School by paragraph 6(2)(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2002; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the College will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. At the College's discretion additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of student
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph 6(3)(f) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (as subsequently amended), by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

PROCEDURE - STUDENTS

The opinions of students are highly valued at Concord College. Their views are sought and offered on a wide range of issues. There are times when they may feel that they wish to make a complaint about an individual aspect of College life, a member of staff or another student. Such complaints will be taken seriously. The following principles apply to any student making a complaint:

- Student views will be taken seriously and students should feel that they are able to make a complaint without fear of any reprisal.
- Students have the right to group together to make a complaint.
- The student may be accompanied to any meeting regarding their complaint.

Procedure

There are structures in place within the College to allow students to voice their concerns. For instance, students can raise concerns with members of staff, such as their Teacher, Houseparent, Director of Studies or Safeguarding Manager. Students and members of the wider staff, both academic and other, develop good and open relationships within Concord's boarding environment. It is often the case that other members of staff are accessible and approachable and can be a resource which students can draw on.

In addition, students can make a complaint in the following manner:

Informally:

Most complaints can be raised informally with a House Parent, Teacher, Assistant Director of Studies, Assistant Course Director or Course Director. Students should expect any complaint that they make to be taken seriously and given due consideration. Any member of staff approached with such a complaint should endeavour to resolve the difficulty and feed-back to the student concerned within a reasonable time. It is hoped that most, if not all complaints can be dealt with in this way.

All complaints will be recorded and staff dealing with complaints will make sure that the Course Director's office receives a record of any concerns raised by students and that the Safeguarding Manager is also informed.

If a student wishes to make a complaint about a Teacher, then the student should be referred to the Director of Studies since she will handle complaints about Teachers.

Formally:

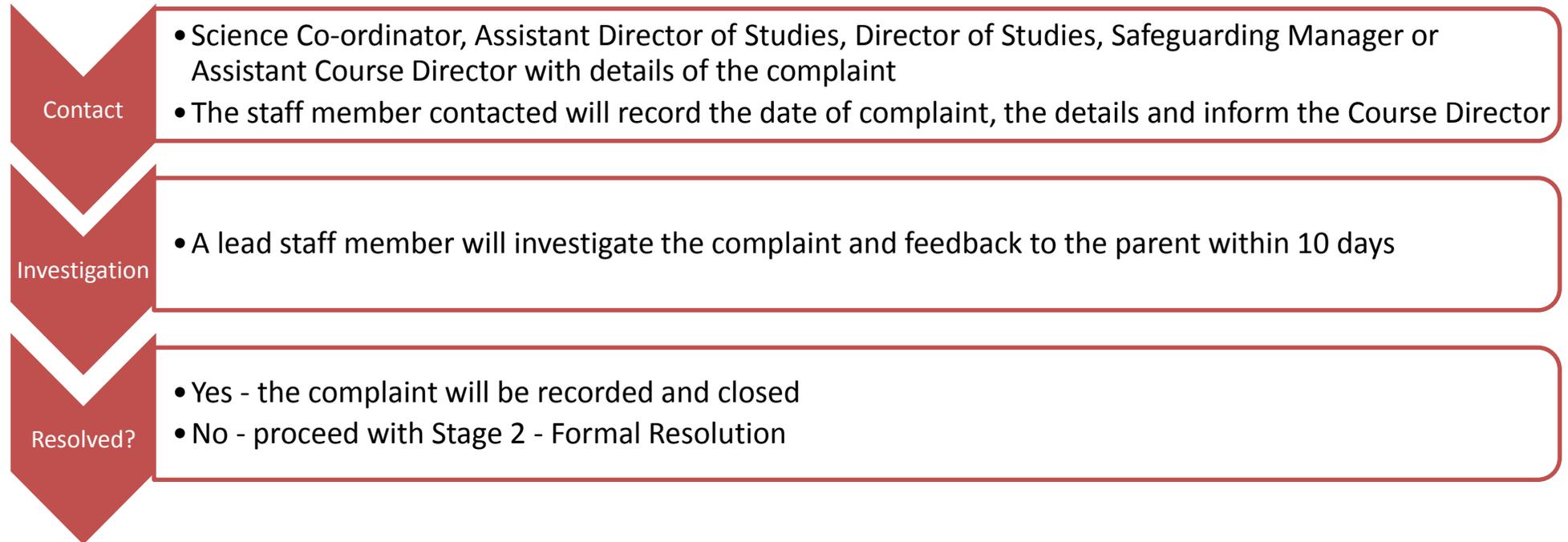
If the issue is of a very serious nature or if the student feels that an informal complaint has not resolved the issue to their satisfaction, then a formal complaint should normally be made to the Director of Studies or Assistant Course Director. It might well be that the Course Director will also become involved in handling the complaint.

This formal complaint can be made in person or in writing. The Course Director, or another Senior Teacher, will then investigate the matter fully, gathering evidence from appropriate sources and keeping a full written record, before coming to a judgement and putting into place any necessary remedial action. The student making the complaint will be informed of the judgement. Once again, every effort will be made to deal with any issue raised in this way within a reasonable time.

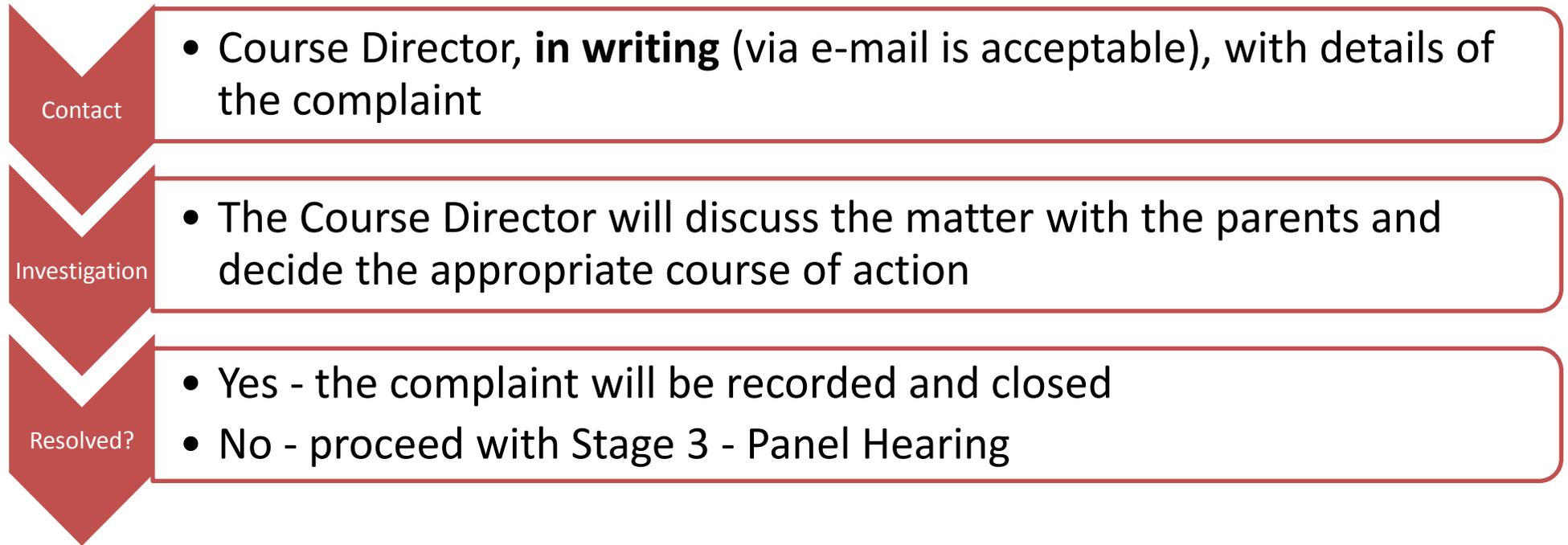
Appeals Procedure:

If the above procedure has been followed and the student feels that their complaint has not been dealt with effectively, they may then choose to ask their parents to make a complaint under the College's 'Parental Complaints Procedure' (detailed from Page 1 of this document). Within this procedure, parents have the right to appeal to the Trustees against any decision made by the Course Director.

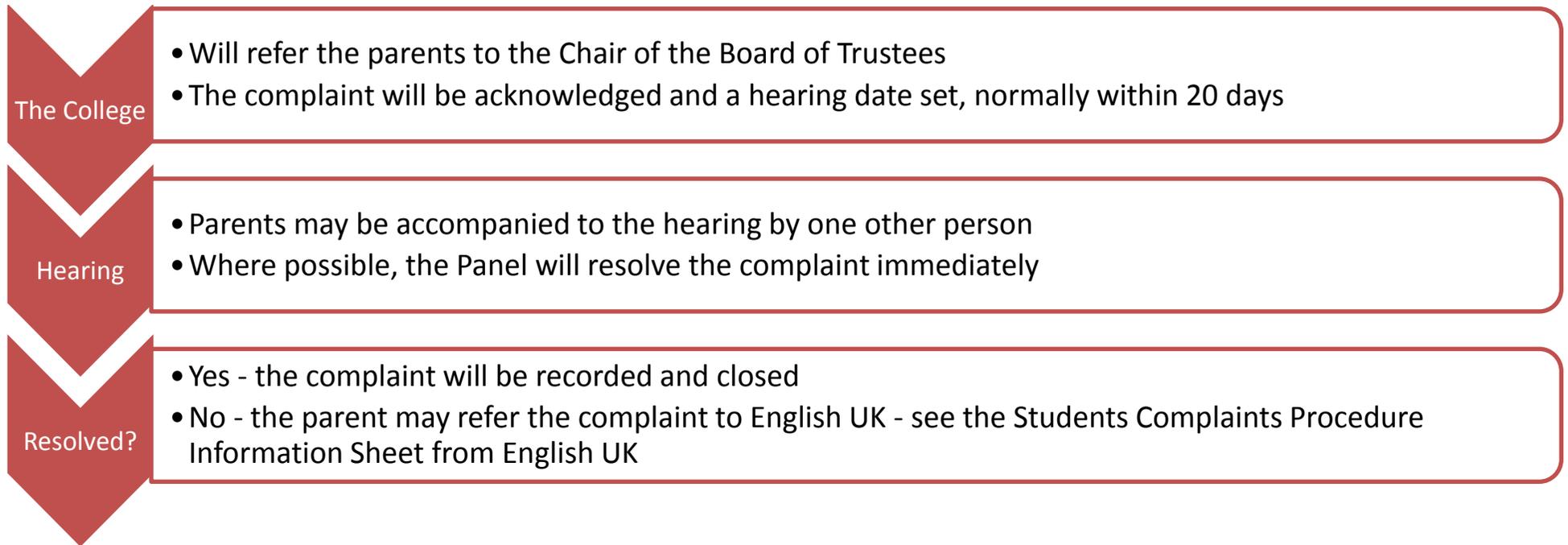
Stage 1 – Informal Resolution (Parent Procedure)



Stage 2 – Formal Resolution (Parent Procedure)



Stage 3 – Panel Hearing (Parent Procedure)



Student Procedure

