

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAMMES

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Sevenoaks School Summer Programme is committed to providing the best teaching and pastoral care it can for its pupils. It is hoped that any worries or complaints can be dealt with informally through the pastoral care framework, but if not the programme has a complaints procedure which is set out below (the “Complaints Procedure”).

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a parent (or someone in loco parentis) with a real or perceived problem. Any complaint made about the Summer Programme as a whole, or about an individual member of staff, or any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the Summer Programme, is within the scope of this procedure. A complaint may arise if a parent believes that the Summer Programme has done something wrong, failed to do something that it should have done, or has acted unfairly.

All concerns and complaints will be treated seriously. Sevenoaks School Summer Programme is here for the students, and parents can be assured that their child will not be penalised for a complaint that is made in good faith, whether justified or not.

The Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally. During the Summer Programme, a response to a complaint should be received, where possible, within 24 hours.
- If parents have a complaint they should contact the Director of Holiday Programmes. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents’ satisfaction. If the Director of Holiday Programmes cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for them to consult with a senior Sevenoaks School Management Team member.
- The Holiday Programmes will keep written notes regarding any complaint received. Should the matter not be resolved within five days or in the event that the Director of Holiday Programmes 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.

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 Holiday Programmes Director. The Holiday Programmes Director will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. The receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 48 hours, indicating how the Summer

Programme proposes to proceed and a copy of the Complaints Procedure will be enclosed with this acknowledgement.

- Once the Holiday Programmes Director is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made within three days and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Holiday Programmes Director will also give reasons for their decision.
- It is hoped that parents will feel satisfied by the outcome, or that, at least all concerns raised by parents have been fully and fairly considered.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure, they may proceed to Stage 3 of the Procedure.

Stage 3 - Appeals Procedure

- If parents wish to proceed to Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure, they should give notice in writing to the Clerk (clerk@sevenoaksschool.org) outlining their grounds of appeal and providing any evidence. New complaints will not be considered at this stage nor will evidence unrelated to the initial complaint be considered. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure.
- The Clerk will acknowledge the written notice within 5 working days and will refer the complaint to the Chief Commercial Officer, who will hear the Appeal.
- After due consideration of all facts, the Chief Commercial Officer will make findings, on the balance of probabilities, as to whether the Stage 2 decision was a reasonable one and decide whether to uphold the Complaint, in whole or in part, and/or make any recommendations.

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Record Keeping and Confidentiality

The School will keep a full written record of Stage 2 or 3 complaints in accordance with its retention schedule.

All concerns will be treated confidentially. Papers generated by or for the purposes of the Complaints Procedure will be kept confidential to the parents, the members of staff involved and the Director as relevant to the processing of the complaint. Information relating to the complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the School's responsibilities under data protection legislation.

Timing: During School holidays it may take longer to resolve a complaint although the School will do what is reasonably practicable to avoid undue delay. It may also take longer to resolve a complaint during periods of significant disruption to School life or as a consequence of unavoidable staff absence, however deviation from the normal timescale for resolving a complaint during term time will only occur on an exceptional basis, and the School will take all reasonable steps to limit any such delay. In the event of any delays, complainants will be kept fully informed.