



Complaints Policy & Review Procedure

Overview statement:

Runnymede College reflects upon and reviews regularly its pastoral and academic provision to ensure that it provides the best possible outcomes for all individual pupils, and also to provide parents and pupils with clear systems through which they can raise concerns and issues.

This policy is for use by parents and guardians of current pupils of the school in circumstances which do not fall within the scope of other procedures. We ask parents who make a complaint to be clear, in writing, that they are making a formal complaint rather than an observation about some aspect of administration or welfare.

For the avoidance of doubt, this procedure does not apply to parents (and guardians) of prospective pupils or pupils who have left the School voluntarily or as a result of being excluded (except in cases where the complaints process was started when the pupil was still being educated at the School).

Confidentiality and record-keeping

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

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept, including the date on which they were received, any meetings or interviews held in relation to the complaints, and whether they were resolved at the formal stage or proceeded to a review hearing. The records will include any actions taken by the School as a result of the complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld).

The school maintains a record of all parent complaints for a minimum of 7 years for review by senior management and for inspection by inspectors.

Runnymede College aims to deal with complaints as sympathetically and expeditiously as possible and to resolve them, either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils. The four stages of resolution (Informal, Formal, Appeal to the Headmaster and Panel Review) are explained in this policy.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1: Informal stage

It is hoped that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally, normally within 14 days. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of parents' complaints are better addressed through informal resolution.

In the first instance, parents should raise a complaint informally with an appropriate member of staff:

- The pupil's Form or Class Tutor or the pupil's Head of Year
- An academic Head of Department
- Head of School (ie the Head of Pre-Prep, Head of Prep, the Senior Deputy Head)

In most cases, this will lead to a satisfactory resolution. During holidays the School will do what it reasonably can to reply promptly to parents and to follow the procedures within this policy. It may be the case that, due to the unavailability of key personnel (staff, pupils and parents), responding in full to a parental complaint can only be fully completed during term time.

The member of staff receiving the complaint will make a written record on the date on which they were received.

In the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2: Formal stage

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents should put their complaint in writing to the relevant Head of Section (Senior Deputy Head, Head of Prep School or Head of Pre-Prep School) The written complaint should outline the nature of the complaint, why they remain dissatisfied and the resolution sought.

In most cases, the relevant Head of Section will communicate with the parent, normally within 7 days of receiving the complaint, to acknowledge receipt. The Head of Section may delegate at this stage to another senior member of staff - normally the relevant Deputy Head.

It may be necessary for the respective Head of Section (or nominee) to carry out further investigations. Every attempt will be made to reach a resolution at this stage.

The investigating member of staff will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once they are satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made, and the parents will be informed of the decision in writing, normally within five normal school-working days.

Stage 3: Appeal to the Headmaster

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision made in respect of their complaint at Stage 2, the complainant should appeal to the Headmaster in writing within five working days after receiving the decision.

The Headmaster will offer to meet with the complainant to discuss the matter, normally within seven working days.

Once the Headmaster is satisfied that all the relevant facts have been established, he will inform the complainant of his decision in writing, normally within five working days of meeting with the complainant.

Stage 4: Applications for a Review Hearing:

Parents must only apply for a review hearing after the informal and formal stages above have been exhausted.

The application for a review hearing should be in writing using the form attached and must outline the nature of the parent's complaint, why they remain dissatisfied and the resolution sought. The letter should be addressed to the Headmaster and should be sent within 7 days of the date a written Stage 3 decision was received from the Head.

Review Panel

The Review Panel will comprise at least two members of the school Management, and one person who shall be independent of the management and running of the School and will act as Chair. The members of the panel will, so far as is reasonably possible, have no previous detailed knowledge of the case or of the pupil(s) and parents concerned.

The Chair, on behalf of the panel, will formally acknowledge the application for a review hearing and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as time allows (normally within 21 days, though this may take longer outside term-time).

REVIEW HEARING

The hearing will take place at the School or such other place as the Chair of the Review Panel should determine. Those present at the hearing will normally be:

- The members of the Review Panel
- The Head (unless this is considered inappropriate because he is the subject of the complaint)
- Other members of staff (if appropriate)
- Parents or those with parental responsibility
- The pupil (if appropriate)
- Independent Chair

Parents may be accompanied by one other person who is over the age of 18 and not a pupil at Runnymede College. This may be a relative, friend or teacher, but not a legal representative. Parents should inform the Review Panel of the individuals attending the hearing 3 working days before the hearing. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the parents (and if applicable their friend) are able to attend the hearing but the hearing will proceed in their absence if they are not able to attend.

The Review Panel will consider the points raised by the parents and the evidence gathered and will make a decision about the complaint and make recommendations.

If possible, the Review Panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.

The decision and any recommendations of the Review Panel will be notified in writing to the parents, the Head, and (where appropriate) the person(s) complained of, by the Chair of the Review Panel, usually within 7 days of the hearing, subject to further investigations being required.

The decision of the Review Panel will be final. The School will not engage in further correspondence regarding the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages of this policy.

A copy of the decision and any recommendations will be retained at the School for reference by the Head and made available for review during an inspection.

The number of formal complaints registered during the preceding school year (including those relating to boarding provision) is available from the School upon request.

Reviewed: June 2025

Next review: June 2026

STAGE 3 COMPLAINT SUBMISSION FORM

Please complete and return to:

Senior Deputy Head / Head of Prep School / Head of Pre-Prep
Runnymede College
Calle Salvia 30
28109
Madrid

headmaster@runnymede-college.com

who will acknowledge and explain what action will be taken

Your name:	
Pupil's name:	
Your relationship to the pupil:	
Postal address:	
Contact phone number	
Email address:	

Please give concise details of your complaint (including dates, events, key evidence, etc.) in order to allow the matter to be fully investigated.

(You may attach additional documents if you wish)

What action have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. with whom have you spoken or to whom have you written and what has been the outcome)

What actions do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?

If you are attaching additional documents, please number these attachments and list details below.

Signature:

Date:

For school use only

Date complaint form received:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Complaint referred to:

Date complaint referred:

STAGE 4 COMPLAINT SUBMISSION FORM

Please complete and return to:

Headmaster
Runnymede College
Calle Salvia 30
28109
Madrid

headmaster@runnymede-college.com

who will acknowledge and explain what action will be taken

Your name:	
Pupil's name:	
Your relationship to the pupil:	

Postal address:	
Contact phone number	
Email address:	

Dear Headmaster

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed and/or the outcome. My complaint was dealt with at Stage 2 of the school's procedures and I received a response from on.....

I am dissatisfied by the way the procedure was carried out because:

And/or by the final outcome because:

(You may continue on separate sheets or attached additional documents if you wish.)

What actions do you feel might resolve the issue at this stage?

I would like the panel to conduct a hearing

a.) on the papers which have been submitted

b.) at a meeting that I will attend

At the meeting I would like to be accompanied by the following:

Signature:

Date:

For school use only

Date complaint form received:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Complaint referred to:

Date complaint referred: