# Pupil Complaints Procedure

*Reviewer: Caty Jacques; Feb 2026*
*Approved by SMT Feb 2026*

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

Hurst makes its complaints procedure available to all pupils in house and on the College's website.

In accordance with part 6 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Hurst will make available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils and provide, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate, details of the complaints procedure and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

## 1. What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is any matter about which a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the College. It may be made about the College as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. We recognise that it is right and appropriate for a pupil to make a complaint if they believe that the College has done something wrong, or failed to do something that it should have done, or acted unreasonably or unfairly.

## 2. Policy Statement

*The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure that a complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently, at the appropriate level, and that it is resolved as quickly as possible.*

Pupils can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially, and that any complaints which they make will not result in any negative treatment of them.

The College will seek to resolve every complaint in a positive manner. We recognise that a complaint which is not resolved quickly and fairly can soon become a cause of resentment which is damaging to relationships and to the culture of the College.

## 3. Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged within five working days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the College's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure within 28 days if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Stage 3 will be completed within a further 28 days if during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Complaints should normally be raised within three months of the matter arising, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## 4. The Complaints Procedure

**Stage 1** It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

- If pupils have a complaint they should initially contact their Housemaster/Housemistress. If they feel unable to do this (or if the complaint is regarding the HoM) they should contact their HoY.
- In the majority of cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway but it may be necessary for other key staff to be involved depending on the nature of the complaint.
- The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved to the pupil's satisfaction, they can proceed to Stage 2.

**Stage 2**

- If the issue cannot be resolved by the HoM/HoY, then the pupil should take their complaint to the Deputy Head Pastoral/Head of Section.
- They will meet with the pupil and attempt to find a resolution. It may be necessary to talk to other key staff depending on the nature of the complaint.
- The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved to the pupil's satisfaction, they can proceed to Stage 3.

**Stage 3**

- If a pupil wishes to pursue a complaint after stage 2 they should contact the Head of College
- The Head of College will meet with the pupil concerned and decide an appropriate course of action. If further investigations are necessary the Head of College (or another senior member of staff appointed by the Head of College) will undertake these.
- The person undertaking the investigations will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head of College is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established a decision will be made and the pupil will be informed, along with reasons for the decision.

## 5. Recording Complaints

The College will keep a written record of all formal complaints (i.e. those not resolved at stage 1) and whether they are resolved at stage 2 or proceed to stage 3. These written records will usually contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue – and particularly if the complaint relates to the boarding provision at the College
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member (s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)
- At the College's discretion, additional records may be kept of other complaints.

The College will keep a written record of action taken as a result of all formal complaints (regardless of whether they were upheld).

If the pupil's parent is making a complaint about the same issue that would supersede the pupil complaint and the process for parental complaints would be followed.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requests access to them.