



## Students' Concerns and Complaints Procedure and Information

The voice of students is vital to everyone and everything we do at Leighton Park.

### **Any Problems, Concerns, Complaints or Suggestions?**

If so, the school would like to hear.

### **Is something making you unhappy or worried? What can you do?**

- Is there a friend who can help?
- Is there an older boy or girl you can talk to?
- Can you talk to your Form Tutor, Head of Section, School Nurses, Housemistress or Housemaster or other House Staff? They are here to help you.
- You can always go directly to the Senior Deputy Head or Head.

There may be circumstances when you would find it easier to talk to someone who is not a member of staff.

- This could be your parents.
- Alternatively, regularly each week, the School Counsellor is in the Health Centre. You can contact them at [schoolcounsellor@leightonpark.com](mailto:schoolcounsellor@leightonpark.com). The counsellors are independent listeners, not part of the School staff and will listen to any concerns raised in an unbiased way.
- In addition you might consider Childline (telephone: 0800 1111) or the NSPCC (telephone 0800 800 5000) or the office of the Children's Commissioner (freephone 0800 528 0731) and [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk) or Support line on 01708 765200 ([info@supportline.org.uk](mailto:info@supportline.org.uk)) If you need a private telephone, your HM or Head of Section will provide one without question.

## **Independent Listener**

Leighton Park also has an independent listener as a possible safety valve for pupils with concerns or problems. The independent listener is Kay Price, an experienced educationist and current teacher/ housemistress in an independent boarding school. She understands the norms and expectations of Leighton Park as well as being very experienced in dealing with the problems and issues young people face.

The Independent Listener is briefed on the School's Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy. The Independent Listener is able to exercise objectivity in responding to concerns and issues raised and will listen carefully to any personal problems or concerns at School. They have no connections to the School which would make them biased. The Independent Listener can be contacted on [independentlistener@leightonpark.com](mailto:independentlistener@leightonpark.com) to arrange a telephone call. They visit the School from time to time to meet with boarders and other students.

### **How do I make a complaint?**

- By talking about it – or by writing it down if you find that easier.
- You can do it by yourself, or as part of a group, or through your parents.

### **To whom?**

- To **anyone** on the staff.
- To senior students, such as the Head Boy and Head Girl, the Deputy Head Boy and Girl and other Senior Prefects. House Captains will also listen, and the Heads of Boarding Houses are also here to help especially if you are a boarder
- Via Monthly Meeting or Boarders' Monthly Meeting.

### **Does it matter what the issue is?**

- No, it can be a big problem or a small one. By discussing it, you may come up with some positive ideas to resolve the issue.

### **What will happen next?**

- If possible, the staff member will deal with it in person. If not, he or she will go on your behalf to someone who can help.

### **Do others have to know?**

- If you are worried about confidentiality, tell the staff – they will understand, and explain their response and any action which they may need to take.
- Even if you find the issue hurtful or embarrassing, don't worry – it will only be discussed by staff who can help you.
- It may not be possible to maintain confidentiality on some issues which staff may need to refer if it is a question of safeguarding.

## **Where can I find further information?**

- The Gold Book contains lots of information about what to do at Leighton Park.

## **What happens if the complaint is not resolved?**

- You can talk to the Head, Senior Deputy Head or either of the Deputy Heads
- If you feel that you have not been able to sort out a complaint on an informal basis you have the right to make a formal complaint. You may wish to involve your parents at this stage if you have not already done so. You may also like to contact the Independent Listener if you feel that a problem has not been properly dealt with by the School.
- You or your parents should write to the Head setting out the complaint and what you want to be done about it. The Head may suggest a meeting to discuss the complaint but will in any case give you a written answer explaining what has been decided. You will not get into trouble for making the complaint if you believe that you have a good reason for doing so.
- The Head will keep a record of serious complaints and what happened to those complaints and will review them from time to time.
- Your parents can also use the School's formal complaints procedure.
- If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, complaints can also be directed to Ofsted on 08456 404040 or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) through Reading Borough Council on 0118 937 3555 or the Independent Schools' Inspectorate on 0207 6000100

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