

Complaints Policy 2017

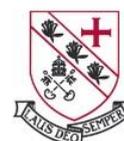
Monitoring

By	Review period	Method
Full Governing Board	Annual	Meeting

Ownership: Helen Peace, Director of Finance and Operations

Revision History

Review	Changes	Next review date
November 2015	Additional stage added	November 2016
October 2016	Process clarified	October 2017
October 2017	Further detail on process added	October 2018



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose of the Policy

To always be receptive to any parent or other party who may wish to raise an issue or complaint and to take all possible reasonable steps to resolve any issue or complaint as quickly as possible. To set out clear procedures for any person especially parents who wish to raise an issue or complaint.

St Joseph's Vision and Values and how this policy support this

Our College Vision statement states that:

“Our Catholic College seeks to be a community in which all are valued, where the life and the relationships of the College are permeated by Gospel values and in which the individual is seen as unique, with infinite potential for growth towards wholeness. The College, in active partnership with home, parish and the wider community, endeavours to prepare all its members for a future in which they will be able to make a positive contribution and take up the challenge of their faith.”

This policy supports this by reviewing feedback from individuals to ensure the College is making a positive contribution to young people's development.

Outline of the Policy

Approach

We believe that our College provides a good education for all our students, and that the Principal and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and the local community. The College requires that any individual who wishes to raise an issue or complaint follows the procedure outlined in the appendix in order that these issues can be resolved as quickly as possible but also reviewed so that further action can be taken if necessary.

The College aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the student above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

This should result in the parent being able to talk in the first instance to the relevant class teacher or tutor about the complaint. It is the policy of the College to always try to resolve complaints through discussion rather than correspondence.

Where the complaint is about something other than a matter linked to a student then the complaint will be initially dealt with by the most relevant member of staff.

In order to monitor the extent of complaints at the College all complaints, including issues and concerns, should be registered with dates and enough brief details to provide an audit trail and to be able to monitor any significant trends. The exact form of the register and the processes used to capture any complaint or issue details is determined by the College management. This register is kept confidential but is open to inspection at any time by Senior Leadership Group members and any member of the College Governing Board. However the Governor and their deputy appointed to participate in a stage 3 complaints process are to be excluded from inspecting the register at any time during the period of their office. This is normally the Chair of the Governing Board or one of the Vice Chairs.

All 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 162A of the 2002 Education Act requests access to them. A log of complaints is kept by the Clerk to the Governing Board.

The College will always support any staff member who requests to be accompanied at any meetings with parents that are to be held or any meetings about a complaint.

This policy applies to all activities of St Joseph's Catholic College and St Joseph's Enterprises Ltd.

Appendix

The complaints process

The college operates a 4 stage process for the resolution of complaints.

STAGE 1

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our college, the policy of the College is that they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher, tutor or student manager. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All staff work very hard to ensure that each student is happy at College, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the student's progress.

Where the complaint is from another party this should be raised with the most appropriate member of staff who will consider the complaint and respond to the concern.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, tutor or student manager, they may request an informal telephone conversation or meeting with a Head of Department or Head of Faculty. If the matter is not resolved at this stage an informal request may be made for a meeting or telephone conversation with a member of the Senior Leadership team. The College will aim to respond to a request for a conversation or meeting within 5 College days.

STAGE 2.

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after an informal response then they should write to the Principal stating clearly that they are making a complaint, giving details of the issue and enclose any appropriate paperwork. A response from the Principal or designated senior member of staff will be made within 5 College days. This member of staff will be different from any member involved in stage one of the process. They will investigate in order to clarify what has happened, who has been involved and what actions could be taken if necessary to resolve the situation. As part of this investigation they may contact the complainant to fully understand the issues. If an in-depth investigation is necessary every attempt will be made to respond within 15 College days. If a complainant remains dissatisfied after the final response from the Principal or designated member of the senior leadership team then Stage 3 of the process will be used.

STAGE 3

If a complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 2, which we would classify as an informal stage, the complaint should be submitted, in writing, to the College, for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Board. The Chair of the Governing Board will investigate to clarify what has happened and the solutions which have been put into place following the stage two and respond within 15 College days.

Where the Chair of the Governing Board is not available this may be delegated to a Vice Chair or another Governor. . This investigation may involve meeting with staff named in the complaint and the complainant.

In the event that the Chair of the Governing Board cannot resolve the complaint to satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant can ask for the complaint to be considered by Stage 4 of the process once the final response from the Chair of the Governing Board has been received.

STAGE 4

Stage 4 of the process involve a panel of at least 3 people. Panel members will be selected from individuals who have had no involvement previously with the complaint or any issues surrounding it. At least one panel member will be completely independent to the school, i.e., not current staff, parent or Governor. If possible the other two members will be made up from staff and a Governor who has not been involved with the complaint so far in the process.

The College will aim to convene a panel meeting within 15 College days of receipt of a Stage 4 complaint. The panel will respond within 10 further College days of the meeting.

This panel will meet to discuss the complaint and request any additional information they feel necessary.

The parent or other party making the complaint may attend and be accompanied at this panel hearing when they are presenting their case. A member of the senior leadership team will also be invited to attend to answer any questions that the panel may have.

After the panel have met and arrived at a decision, the parent or other party will be informed of the decision, after the hearing if they are in attendance and/or by email and post.

After hearing any representations by the complainant the panel will deliberate in private and reach a decision unless they decide that further legal advice or investigation is required.

The complainant will be informed of any decision immediately afterwards if they are in attendance or in writing by post or email if they are not. Any verbal communication of a decision will be confirmed in writing within 5 College days

To avoid doubt, College management will decide when each stage of the process is exhausted and will communicate this to the complainant.

The person who is the recipient of the complaint will also be informed of the decision, if relevant.

Where the complaint is about the Principal the person raising the complaint should in the first instance direct correspondence to the Chair of the Governing board c/o the Clerk. The Chair will designate a Governor to investigate the complaint in a similar process described above. This will not be a staff or parent Governor

Where the complaint is about the Chair of the Governing Board or another Governor then in the first instance direct correspondence to the Clerk to the Governing Board who will designate a Governor to investigate the complaint in a similar process described above. If appropriate this is likely to be Vice Chair of the Governing board.

Where the complaint is about the clerk then correspondence should be directed to the Chair of the Governing Board who will designate an appropriate person to investigate in a similar process to that described above.

Where a complainant is raising serial complaints or endeavouring to reopen issues which the College has responded to and taken reasonable steps to address the issue the College will re-issue the statement of response and then not respond further. This is likely to be the case when the College believes that the individual is contacting the College with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience, the communications from the complainant are abusive or aggressive there are threats made to the College or its staff.

Initial complaints about institutions funded by the ESFA can be made on the 'Contact Us' form on the ESFA website:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus/efa> .

They can also be made in writing to:

***ESFA** Institution Complaints*

Young People's Programme Management

Education Skills Funding Agency

Earlsdon Park 55 Butts Road Coventry CV1 3BH

