



COMPLAINTS POLICY

St George Catholic College prides itself on providing an excellent education and opportunities for its students. It seeks to provide a collaborative and supportive environment for all users of the college and their families. Should this service fall short of your expectations and you are unable to resolve your concerns informally this policy details how a complaint can be made and the procedures to follow.

Aim of Policy

Should a complaint be made we will aim to deal with people courteously and in a sensitive and helpful manner.

We will aim to put things right where it is clear we have not given the service that you have the right to expect

We will analyse complaints so that we can plan for the future by taking your views into account

The stages to follow

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the College, the people who can best deal with any problems you have are the class teachers or tutor. Let them know that something is wrong and they will try to sort it out straightaway wherever possible. Parents may have complaints about other matters not covered by this procedure and in such instances should contact the College for advice and see the Headteacher.

The intention is that any issue is resolved at the earliest opportunity. If this is not successful, there are three stages through which a complaint may pass.

Stage one

If things cannot be resolved, or if you are still unhappy with the way we are handling your concerns, you can make a complaint. It is essential that the complaint is made to the teacher you have been dealing with. You can do this by writing a letter, completing a complaints form or speaking to the member of staff, either face to face or on the telephone.

Stage two

If you are unhappy with the outcome of stage one you can take the matter further and complain to the Headteacher. Your complaint will be fully investigated and we will respond within 10 working days, either verbally or in writing.

Stage three

If you are still unhappy after the stage two investigation you can complain to the Chair of Governors. Your complaint will be fully reviewed and a response will be sent to you within 15 working days. We will let you know if it is going to take any longer. If the Chair of Governors feels that it would help to resolve the complaint he will call a panel of governors together to personally hear your complaint and decide what actions to take. This hearing will take place within one month, at a time that is mutually convenient. The formal complaint should be addressed to the College Governing Body via Chair of Governors at St George Catholic VA College, Leaside Way, Southampton SO16 3DQ.

Stage four

We hope our complaints procedure will help you to sort out quickly and successfully any problems you may have with the College. However, if you do not think that we have dealt with your complaint properly, you can make a complaint to the Local Authority.

Statutory Complaints

Some complaints come outside the scope of the College's own complaints procedure and are shown below. They are matters where there are already specific processes in place and should be referred to the relevant section of Local Authority.

Admissions

Southampton LA has responsibility for admissions to community and controlled schools. Any appeals or complaints should be referred to the admissions team.

Child Protection

The Social Services Department and the police will investigate Child Protection issues. The College's prime responsibility is to trigger the appropriate procedure through the Social Services and should not attempt to investigate the issues.

The Curriculum and Religious Worship

The Governing Body should initially consider complaints about the curriculum. If the complainant is still not satisfied after this, or feels that the LA or Governing Body has acted "unreasonably" or failed to discharge a statutory duty in relation to the College's curriculum or religious worship, s/he should be referred to Southampton's advisory team in the first instance.

Exclusions

Governing bodies are required to set up exclusions committees to consider exclusions. Guidance for procedures have been issued by the Diocese.

Special Educational Needs

Parents and college staff will naturally be in close contact about the special educational needs provision for individual students and concerns will normally be resolved between parents and the college. However, formal complaints should be referred to the special educational needs department.

Personnel Matters

Any staff disciplinary or grievance matters for staff employed in community and controlled schools should be dealt with under the procedures adopted by the Governing Body.

Recording of complaints

The DFE recommends that complaints be recorded properly and timescales for dealing with complaints are appropriate. Appendix A will be the pro forma the College will now use to give to parents to record serious complaints as they come in.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Date of next review: June 2018

The Policy Working Group agreed this policy on 13 June 2016.

Appendix A

Complaints form record

**Please complete and return to(Headteacher)
who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.**

Your name:

Pupil's name (if relevant):

Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

**What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?**

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

APPENDIX B

Supplementary

A panel hearing needs to take the following points into account:

- The hearing is as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The headteacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The headteacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the headteacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The headteacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The Chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale.