

Complaints Policy
and Procedure
2021-2022

Adopted by the Governing Board: November 2021
To be reviewed by Governors: November 2022

SLT: Principal

Governor: Chair of Governors

Policy

Your views are important to us and we recognise how good relationships between parents and the college are vital for the wellbeing of young people in our care. If you have a complaint we want to deal with it as quickly and effectively as we can. If we have made a mistake we will try to put it right as quickly as possible and put in place steps to prevent it from reoccurring. Otherwise we will aim to resolve the dispute in a constructive manner. At all times we will put the needs of the student first.

Procedure:

The majority of concerns from parents, carers and others are handled under the following general procedures. The procedure is divided into the following stages;

1. **The Informal Stage**

Many complaints or concerns can be resolved quickly and effectively through direct contact with the person concerned. There are a number of ways you can do this:

- **Telephone:**

The best person to contact by telephone is your son or daughter's Pastoral Manager. After taking details of your complaint, the Pastoral manager will be able to discuss the concerns with any other party and respond to you within **two to three working days**. If it is appropriate, the Pastoral Manager will ask the member of staff concerned to contact you directly.

- **A face to face meeting**

Please arrange these through the Pastoral Manager. Unfortunately due to teaching commitments we are unable to see parents without a pre-arranged appointment. This meeting should be arranged **within 5 working days** of the complaint.

2. **Formal Written Complaint**

If you are still not satisfied with our response, you may wish to put your concern in writing to the Pastoral Manager. Please clearly state the nature of your complaint and the outcome you wish to achieve. In order to deal with your complaint efficiently, it is helpful if you can summarise each point, using bullet points, this will enable us to investigate your complaint more effectively. He/she will share the matter with a member of the **senior leadership team** and you will receive a written response **within five school days**. Before receiving a written response, the staff concerned will contact you by telephone and, if appropriate, arrange a meeting. Our aim is to communicate effectively with you and correct any mistakes we may have made. Sometimes, we may disagree with the complaint and we will give you a clear explanation of our reasons. We hope your complaint will be resolved by this stage and believe that the best outcomes for our students come when parents and school recognise that, although we may occasionally have our differences, we will continue to work together for the benefit of the young person.

3. **Complaint to the Principal**

If stages 1 and 2 have not been successful, you should contact the principal in writing **within 10 working days**. Please describe the nature of your complaint and what you would like the principal to do. In order to investigate your complaint effectively please state clearly which parts of the complaint have not been

addressed at the previous stages. Your complaint will be acknowledged but a full response **may take up to 10 working days**. This is to give the principal time to investigate your concerns properly. Following the investigation, you will receive a response in writing. You may also be invited to a meeting or contacted by telephone to discuss the matter in more detail. Please note the principal may also refer the matter to another member of staff if stage 1 and 2 have not been completed. We hope this stage brings the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. Otherwise, there is one more stage in our internal procedure.

4. **Complaint to the Chair of Governors**

If you remain dissatisfied, you may write to the Chair of Governors at the school's address, **within 15 working days** of the response from the Principal. Again, please make the nature of your complaint clear and describe the outcome you would like to achieve. He/she will then undertake one of the following:

- **Refer the complaint to the principal:**

This will be done automatically if the earlier stages have not been followed, unless the complaint is about misconduct by the principal.

- **Determine whether the principal has acted correctly**

Should the Chair of Governors be satisfied that the school has followed all the procedures, acted in accordance with published policies and the facts are clear, he/she will provide a written response, **within 15 working days**, describing why no further action is deemed necessary.

Refer the matter to a panel of governors

If you are still unsatisfied, if the facts have not been fully established or procedures may not have been followed correctly, the chair will ask a small group of governors who have not been involved in the matter to consider your complaint. You will be invited to meet the panel to present your case in person. The panel will investigate and review the handling of your complaint by the principal and decide if it was appropriate and fair. You will receive a written response **within 10 working days** of the hearing.

5. **Final Options**

Where you have been through the school's internal complaints procedures (with or without recourse to a complaints review panel) and are still unhappy with the outcome or decision from the governing body, you can contact the Secretary of State for Education via the DfE website www.education.gov.uk, by telephoning 0370 000 2288 or by writing to the address below:

The Schools Complaints Unit (SCU)
Department for Education
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2D

Please enclose with your letter to the DfE a copy of the complaint outcome. This will save time in that the DfE will not need to ask for our view of what has happened. We

would advise parents that, unless the school is shown to have behaved unreasonably or not to have followed their own procedures, there is likely to be little further action that can be taken, as governing bodies are empowered to deal with many issues without reference to either the local authority or the secretary of state.

Other sources of information and advice:

If your concern is about an aspect of special educational needs or disability provision, which might include information about relevant voluntary organisations and support groups in Leeds, you might like to contact Leeds City Council Family Information Service, e-mail: familyinformation.leeds.gov.uk.