

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## Introduction

It is the aim of the whole (3 – 18) College to work closely with parents for the benefit of their children. To that end we aim to establish an effective partnership with parents. This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS and is available to parents through the website and in hard copy by emailing [headmaster@stbedescollege.co.uk](mailto:headmaster@stbedescollege.co.uk).

Inevitably there may be occasions when parents have queries or concerns which they feel need to be communicated to the College. In that event, parents will find the staff of the College both accessible and approachable. Parents should contact the College to arrange a mutually convenient appointment to meet with appropriate members of staff so that all concerned can give due time and consideration to the issues at hand. In the case of the Prep, contact should be made with the Prep Office or class teacher, for pupils in the Senior part of the College, contact should be made with the Main School Office, an email sent to the Form Tutor or Head of House.

The Headmaster, Head of Prep and SLT will make themselves available to meet parents, at short notice if necessary, to consider any urgent matters or concerns.

If parents have a complaint they can expect it to be treated by the College in accordance with the following procedure. The process involves a three stage procedure.

## Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most informal complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their:

- son/daughter's class teacher (Prep)
- son/daughter's Form Tutor (Senior/Sixth Form)

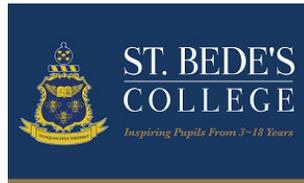
In most cases, the informal complaint will be resolved within 4 working days by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the class teacher (Prep) or Form Tutor (Senior/Sixth Form) cannot resolve the matter alone it may be necessary for him/her to consult as appropriate:

- Deputy Head of Prep or Head of Prep (Prep)
- Subject teacher, Head of Faculty, Head of Section or SLT (Senior)
- Assistant Heads or Head of Sixth Form (Sixth Form)

Each teacher will make a record of all concerns and complaints, note the date on which they were received and keep a copy of correspondence of how the informal complaint was resolved.

Any informal complaint should normally be resolved within 4 working days of the receipt of the complaint.

In the event that staff may fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in writing, in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.



## **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head of Prep (Prep) or the Headmaster (Senior/Sixth Form).

In most cases, the Head of Prep (Prep) or Headmaster (Senior/Sixth Form) will meet the parents concerned, normally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

The Head of Prep (Prep) and the Headmaster (Senior/Sixth Form) will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Head of Prep (Prep) or Headmaster (Senior/Sixth Form) is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. Reasons for the conclusions will be stated. This information will be communicated to parents within 5 working days of a meeting with parents.

The following arrangements for record keeping apply:

- Head of Prep (Prep) and the Headmaster (Senior/Sixth Form) will keep all records of any formal complaints, the action taken as a result of any complaint (whether upheld or not) and document whether it was solved through Formal Resolution or Panel Hearing

It may be necessary for the Head of Prep to refer a complaint to the Headmaster to carry out further investigations and meetings with parents. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure within 7 working days of the Stage 2 Formal Resolution Outcome.

## **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Secretary to the Governors c/o the College who has been appointed by the Governors to call a Panel Hearing should it be necessary.

The matter will then be referred to the Panel Hearing for due consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the College. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Governors. The Secretary to the Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 10 working days of the invocation of Stage 3.

If the Panel considers it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend.



If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all relevant facts, the Panel will reach a decision (which may include recommendations) within 5 days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of and be made available for inspection on the school premises.

A written record will be kept of all formal complaints and of whether they have been resolved at the Stage 2 or have proceeded to a Panel Hearing including the action taken by the College as a result of the complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential but they must be available to Ofsted (EYFS) and ISI on request.

Should a parent wish to complain direct to Ofsted or ISI regarding the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements, the addresses are:

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. General Helpline: 0300 123 1231; Text Phone No: 0161 618 8524.

ISI, Ground Floor, Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane London EC1A 9HA. Tel: 0207 600 0100.

<b>Agreed by:</b>	Chair of Governors and Governing Body
<b>Date:</b>	March 2017
<b>Effective date of the policy</b>	March 2017
<b>Date of Review:</b>	September 2019

Appendix 1:

Number of complaints reaching Stage 2 (Formal Resolution) and / or Stage 3 (Panel Hearing) in the 2016/17 academic year: 1 (one)

The same complaint was carried forward and resolved in the academic year 2017/18.