



Complaints Policy

Approved by:	PWG	Date: 22 nd March 2023
Last reviewed on:	May 2021	
Next review due by:	May 2024	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St George Catholic College is in the Trusteeship of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth and maintained by Southampton City Council Local Authority. Our school leaders and governors are entrusted by the Bishop with the ministry of school leadership and will always act in recognition of the love of Christ for all members of our College community and one another.
- 1.2 We share a vocation for the common good in our world and we are committed to working together as a family. All of our policies and procedures are formed to enable all members of our St George family to be safe and cherished, feel happy and fulfilled and be treated fairly in a positive environment founded on mutual respect and shared values. This policy is part of the foundation that enables everyone to **aspire to be all that God has created us to be**.
- 1.3 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.

2.0 AIM OF POLICY

- 2.1 Should a complaint be made we will aim to deal with people courteously and in a sensitive and helpful manner.
- 2.2 We will aim to put things right where it is clear we have not given the service that you have the right to expect.
- 2.3 We will analyse complaints so that we can plan for the future by taking your views into account.

3.0 THE STAGES TO FOLLOW

- 3.1 Any individual can complain to the school about the service we provide whether you have a child attending our school or not.
- 3.2 Complaints should be raised within 3 months.
- 3.3 If you are unhappy with the College, the people who would normally deal with any problems you have are the class teachers, tutor or progress leader. Let them know that something is wrong and they will try to sort it out straightaway wherever possible. If your complaint is about other matters not covered by this procedure you should contact the College for guidance.
- 3.4 The intention is that any issue is resolved informally at the earliest opportunity. If this is not successful, there are two formal stages through which a complaint may pass.
- 3.5 **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. Please submit a complaint form (Appendix A) to the

Headteacher, or to the Executive Headteacher if the complaint is about the Headteacher. Your complaint will be fully investigated and we normally respond in writing within 10 working days.

If you are unable to submit a written form, support is available if you or a third party acting on your behalf contacts the school. We will be able to make any reasonable adjustment necessary to make sure your complaint is heard.

3.6 Stage two

If you are still unhappy after the stage one of your complaint, you can escalate the matter to the Chair of Governors. Your complaint will be fully reviewed and a response will usually 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 they would call an impartial panel of governors together to review your complaint and decide what actions to take. The formal complaint should be addressed to the Chair of Governors at St George Catholic VA College. Details can be found on the College website.

4.0 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 authorities set out below:-

4.1 ADMISSIONS

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

4.2 SAFEGUARDING MATTERS

The college has separate policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and child protection which can be found on our website.

4.3 THE CURRICULUM

The Governing Body should consider complaints about the college's delivery of the curriculum, but not the content of the National Curriculum which should be directed to the DfE.

4.4 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

As a designated Catholic school any complaints about collective worship should be directed to the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.

4.5 PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS

A Governing body Committee is required to review any permanent exclusions. Guidance of this is enclosed with the correspondence sent to parents.

4.6 SUSPENSIONS

Parents are able to make a written statement to the Clerk to the Governors if they wish to do so, but the Governing Body are not able to overturn the Headteacher's decision. The Governing Board must consider parents' representations but is not able to direct the student's reinstatement. It may however make a note to put on the student's school record.

4.7 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

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.

4.8 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.

5.0 RECORDING OF COMPLAINTS

The DFE recommends that complaints be recorded properly and timescales for dealing with complaints are appropriate. Appendix A will be the proforma the College will use to give to parents to record serious complaints as they come in. Support will be offered to anyone unable to complete the form for whatever reason, and reasonable adjustments will be made, including representation from a third party such as an interpreter.

The College will keep the following secure confidential records for all formal complaints received:

- Records of the progress of the complaint
- Notes of meetings and phone calls
- Copies of letters or emails related to the complaint

6.0 PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS OR HARASSMENT

St George Catholic College takes all complaints seriously, however there may be times when such complaints become obsessive, persistent, harassing and go beyond what is considered reasonable. In these cases the College will follow the procedure attached to this policy as Appendix B.

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

The College's Actions in Cases of Persistent or Vexatious Complaints or Harassment

St George Catholic College takes all complaints seriously, however there may be times when the complaints or the complainants' actions go beyond being reasonable and these include actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing or repetitious.

In the first instant the College will verbally inform the complainant that their action is considered unreasonable/unnecessary and if not modified further action may be taken.

If the behaviour is not modified, the College will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, (not necessarily in the sequential order below) having regard to the nature of the complainant's behaviour and the effect of this on the College community:

- 1) inform the complainant in writing that their behaviour is now considered by the College to be unreasonable/unacceptable and, therefore falls under the terms of this policy procedure
- 2) inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties
- 3) inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, all routine communication from the complainant to the College should be by letter only
- 4) in the case of physical or verbal aggression, we may refer the matter to the police and consider warning the complainant about being banned from the College site; or we may proceed straight to a temporary ban
- 5) inform the complainant of a permanent ban from the College site
- 6) consider taking legal action on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation

Legitimate new complaints will still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to previous persistent or vexatious actions. In these circumstances legal advice may be sought.

If a complainant's persistent complaining/harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date within a reasonable period of time, the College may resume the process identified above at an appropriate level. In these circumstances legal advice may be sought from legal advisors.