



## **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, tutor or progress leader. 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 Head of School.

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 member of staff 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 by submitting a complaint form (Appendix A) to the Head of School. Your complaint will be fully investigated and we will respond within 10 working days in writing.

### **Stage three**

If you are still unhappy after the stage two investigation, you can escalate the matter 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 they would call a 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.

### **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. See details at [www.southampton.gov.uk](http://www.southampton.gov.uk)

### **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/Safeguarding**

The Local Authority 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 College has an 'Allegations against Staff/Governors Policy' which should be followed for complaints in relevant circumstances.

### **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.

### **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.

**This policy will be reviewed every two years.**

**Date of next review: June 2020**

**The Policy Working Group agreed this policy on 29 June 2018.**

**Appendix A**

**COMPLAINTS FORM RECORD**

**Please complete and return to .....(Head of School)  
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:**

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**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 complaint 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.