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ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff

Complaints Policy

St John's College, Cardiff

COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2023

St John's College Cardiff believes that constant feedback is an important aspect of School improvement, and raising standard. Pupils, parents and staff are encouraged to share their views, opinions and any concerns they may have. People who have concerns or complaints, where they are pupils or adults, should feel that they can be voiced and that they will be considered seriously.

There are various principles behind this Policy:

1. There is a difference between a concern and complaint. A concern is likely to require discussion, perhaps involving a teacher, pupil and parent, and it is hoped that it can be resolved quickly by such a discussion and appropriate action. If this does not resolve the concern, then it could become a complaint.
2. A complaint is likely to arise where there are issues of physical or emotional well-being and security, or when the School's stated aims, or values, are being ignored.
3. A breach of the law will always constitute a complaint.
4. Feedback will be actively sought from pupils (through Student Council) and parents (through informal and formal meetings), in order to minimise complaints.
5. At all stages of dealing with a complaint, pupils may always be accompanied by a parent, or another appropriate adult.
6. The Headteacher will be informed of all complaints, and their outcome.
7. A written record will be kept of all formal complaints, and of whether or not they are resolved at the preliminary stages or proceed to a panel hearing.
8. In accordance with the Regulatory Requirements for the Provision of Information, the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding School year, will be available on request.
9. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept strictly confidential, except where the Welsh Government or body conducting an inspection requests access to them.

Outline of procedure to be followed

STAGE 1 - informal:

1. All complaints will normally be dealt with by an appropriate member of the Senior Staff, who will keep the Headteacher informed.
2. Please note that it is always possible for a complaint to be made and considered on an informal basis.
3. If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, then it progresses to the next stage, when it becomes a formal complaint and is reported in writing.

STAGE 2 - Formal:

- 1.** The complaint should be made formally in writing to the appropriate member of staff.
- 2.** The colleague, who receives correspondence, from a complainant, will document the complaint, acknowledge it in writing within 10 working days of receipt, and deal with or consult with those directly involved, and aim to deal with the complaint within 15 - 20 working days of receipt of the formal letter of complaint itself, informing the Headteacher throughout.
- 3.** The colleague dealing with the complaint will also meet with the complainant and, following any necessary investigation or actions, provide a written response to the complaint, a copy of which will go to the Headteacher.
- 4.** If the complaint is not dealt with directly by the Headteacher, and if it cannot be resolved, then it can be handed over to the Headteacher who will deal with it within 10 working days of first being notified, that is, if it has not been resolved (either by the colleague dealing with it, or by the complainant).
- 5.** If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Headteacher, the complainant will be advised of the next stage which is to have the complaint heard before a panel appointed by the Chair of Trustees.

STAGE 3 - Panel Hearing:

- 1.** If the parents are not satisfied with the response to the complaint as dealt with at Stage 2 above, then they will be invited to write to the Chair of the Trustees (at the School address) requesting a panel hearing.
- 2.** The request for a panel hearing must be as soon as possible and in any event within 10 working days, if possible, of the decision in Stage 2 of the complaint being notified to parents.
- 3.** The Chair of the Trustees will appoint a panel that will consider the complaint, within 20 working days of receipt of the notification.
- 4.** The panel will have at least 3 people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, including one person who is independent of the management and running of the School.
- 5.** The parent may attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish. Parents concerned will be asked to confirm whether they plan to attend and speak at the hearing. They will also be asked whether they would like another person to accompany them to the hearing. This may be a relative or friend. Legal representation of either party will not normally be appropriate.
- 6.** The panel will also consider the Headteacher's response and carry out further investigations and/or interviews, if appropriate.
- 7.** The panel will aim to reach a final decision on the complaint and recommend an appropriate action as quickly as possible, normally within 10 working days (and no longer than 15 working days), after the panel hearing.

8. The panel will record in writing its findings and recommendations and will be sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant, the Headteacher and, where relevant, the person complained about. This will normally be sent out within 20 working days of the panel hearing.

9. The panel's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

We shall keep a record of complaints for at least 3 years; **St John's College, Cardiff, CF3 5YX**

PUPIL COMPLAINTS

If a pupil needs advice or wants to talk over a problem they have ready access to three adults: the Form Teacher, the Head of Year and Mrs Emma Jones - Assistant Head Pastoral.

They may also consult any of the School Chaplain Team or Mrs Holland, Health and Wellbeing Officer.

Any pupil needing to make a formal complaint should, in the first instance, always make the complaint to the Head of Year or, at least, make the nature of the complaint known to them.

If the matter needs to be taken further by the complainant, because it cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the level of the Head of Year or because the complaint involves the Head of Year, the complaint should be made to the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

A pupil making a complaint in good faith can always expect their complaint to be taken seriously and for it to be dealt with thoroughly.

All complaints will be recorded with details of the date, nature of the complaint, the action taken and the outcome with any supporting documentation.

Procedures concerning child protection and/or safeguarding matters are detailed in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.