



St John's
School Billericay

Complaints Procedure

Date: July 2019
Those Responsible: Mrs F S Armour - Headteacher
Mr A Angeli - Deputy Headteacher
Mrs A Fleming – Whole School Director

To be reviewed: Regularly

ST JOHN'S SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy is available to the parents of pupils from the School Office or School Website. It applies to the parents of all pupils currently registered at the school, including those in the EYFS.

Introduction

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure.

Please note that where this policy refers to working days, for clarification purposes, this means Monday to Friday during term time.

A complaint refers to any matter about which a parent or pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction.
- If the Form teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a head of department or Head of Department/Head of Pastoral Care. For clarification purposes, the following table shows the usual order for referring of issues.

	Kindergarten	Junior School	Senior School
1	Kindergarten Co-ordinator Sandra Revill	Junior School Coordinator Jo Littlefield	Head of Department/ Head of Pastoral Care U3-U4 Sharon Zoller L5-U5 Barbara Hobbs
2	Whole School Director Amy Fleming	Whole School Director Amy Fleming	Whole School Director Amy Fleming
3	Deputy Head Andrew Angeli	Deputy Head Andrew Angeli	Deputy Head Andrew Angeli
4	Head Teacher Fiona Armour	Head Teacher Fiona Armour	Head Teacher Fiona Armour

- Complaints made directly to a head of department/the Deputy Head/the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant Form teacher unless the head of department/the Deputy Head/the Headteacher deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

- The Form teacher will make a record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. This may consist of e-mail records with the parents, or may include an entry on to the Engage System Day book. Should the matter not be resolved within seven working days or in the event that the Form teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint 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 Headteacher. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases the Headteacher will meet/speak to the parents concerned normally within seven working days (but always within twenty eight working days) of receiving the complaint. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.

Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation with 28 working days. The record of complaints must be made available to OFSTED and ISI on request.

- It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations.
- The Headteacher will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing within seven working days. The Headteacher will also give reasons for her decision.
- The Headteacher will keep written records of the outcome – this will specify whether the complaint has been resolved at the formal stage or whether it will proceed to a panel hearing. Any actions taken as a result of the complaint will also be recorded.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing for Appeals against the decision made by the Headteacher

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they will be referred to Mrs J Osen (Proprietor).
- The matter will then be referred to the Appeals Panel for 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 school. Our general view is that people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinising evidence and putting forward balanced arguments would be suitable. Examples of persons likely to be suitable are serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other school, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the proprietor, Mrs J Osen, on behalf of the Panel.

The complaint will be acknowledged and schedule a hearing to take place within 28 working days.

- If the Panel deems 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 not later than 7 working days prior to the hearing.
- One other person may accompany the parents to the hearing. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- 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 facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 7 working 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 or electronically by email) to the parents, the Headteacher, the Principal and, where relevant, the person complained about. A record will be kept of any actions taken as a result of the complaint.
- 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 except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 7(k) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations of January 2017; where the Secretary of State or a body conducting and inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.
- A written record of all complaints received by the school, including the findings and recommendations, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, will be kept available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the headteacher.

The number of formal complains for the academic year of 2018 to 2019 is three, with none of these resulting in a Stage 3 Panel Hearing.

- If Parents wish to raise a concern, they can email concerns@isi.net or call 020 7600 0100.

Parents are encouraged to raise their concerns directly with the school, if necessary using the school's formal complaints procedure – and if you wish you may copy ISI in on any correspondence. Parents should know that ISI is unable to become directly involved in individual complaints or disputes, or in any contractual matters.