



St George's Junior School

WEYBRIDGE

COMPLAINTS POLICY

We are:

Perfectly balanced; co-educational; 3 – 18; Josephite; Catholic

Our Mission:

To inspire all in our Josephite, Georgian Family to be the very best version of themselves.

Children's Mission Statement:

"Learning to Live and Love like Jesus"

This policy applies to parents of children currently attending St George's Junior School.

If you have any concerns about any aspect of your child's life at school, please contact an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible. We take expressions of concern seriously and wish to follow them up promptly. We know that things can go wrong and we want to be able to sort things out.

If you believe something has gone wrong and you wish to make a complaint, the procedures below describe how parents can expect to be treated. In dealing with such matters, we recognise the importance of confidentiality, fairness and ensuring that no one suffers unjustly. This is particularly the case with respect to the pupils; under no circumstances would the Junior School discriminate against a pupil because of the expression of a complaint.

Our procedures have three stages, informal, formal and an appeal process.

Timeframe for dealing with complaints

Though we will do our very best to adhere to the timescales published below, these may be unavoidably affected by disruption/staff absence caused by the current Covid situation.

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively and it is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible. A complaint received in the School holidays may take longer to investigate and resolve, but the school will endeavour to respond with its findings as soon as practicable and certainly within 28 days for a Stage 1 or 2 complaint. A Stage 3 complaint received in the School holidays will be dealt with as quickly as practicable and certainly within 8 weeks of receipt. The following timings refer to term time dates.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- We hope that most complaints will be resolved quickly and informally. For most day to day matters, the right person is likely to be the Group Tutor or relevant teacher.

- Parents should normally contact their child's Head of Year or the relevant Curriculum Leader. You should get an acknowledgement within 3 term time weekdays and it is hoped that the matter will be resolved by this person. It may be necessary to consult with one of the Deputies or subject/Group Tutor in order to try to reach a resolution.
- If a complaint is made directly to the Headmaster or a Deputy, unless they feel it is appropriate for them to deal with the matter themselves, the issue may be directed to the Head of Year or Curriculum Leader.
- The member of staff dealing with the complaint will keep a written record and record the date on which it was received.
- Complaints should be resolved within 15 term time weekdays of receipt or within 15 term time weekdays after the recommencement of term (full or half) following from the receipt of a complaint during a holiday period. If a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved in this time, then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved under the informal procedure of Stage 1, the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster.
- The Headmaster will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 term time weekdays and will arrange to meet parents formally within 10 term time weekdays, but certainly no more than 15 such days upon receipt of the complaint.
- The Headmaster will keep a record of meetings and interviews that may be necessary for him to establish as far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts.
- The Headmaster will attempt to find a resolution and if necessary this will be made by him and parents will be informed in writing within 20 term time weekdays of the receipt of the complaint. The Headmaster will give the reasons for his decision.
- Parents may proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the Headmaster's decision.

Stage 3 – Appeal Hearing

The following describes the process for the Appeal hearing open to parents who are not satisfied after the first two stages. It may also be used to make a complaint against the Headmaster.

- Parents should write to the Clerk of Governors at the College address indicating the nature of their appeal/complaint. The Clerk should acknowledge your request within 3 term time weekdays or as soon as practicable in the school holidays.
- The Clerk will ask that the Governors convene an Appeal/Complaints Panel. The Panel must consist of not less than three people not directly involved in the matters detailed. Two members of the Panel must be Governors and the third must be someone who is independent of the management and running of the school.
- The Clerk must then, with as little delay as possible, arrange a mutually acceptable time for the parents, Governors and Headmaster to have an Appeal/Complaints Hearing. This should happen within 4 term time weeks and as soon as practicable in the school holidays.

- The parents and Headmaster will be asked to submit their own statements in writing at least 7 days before the Hearing. All such material will be sent in advance of the hearing to all parties.
- At the Appeal/Complaints Hearing, the Governors will hear the issues brought by the parents and Headmaster independently and may submit questions to both the parents and the Headmaster. The parents may be accompanied to the Hearing by one other person, who will not normally be legally trained. The Clerk will record the proceedings. The Panel can:
 - Dismiss the complaint in whole or part;
 - Uphold the complaint in whole or part;
 - Decide upon appropriate action to resolve the complaints;
 - Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures.
- The Panel's decision is final, and a copy of the Panel's findings and recommendations will be provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, in writing, within 5 working days.
- A copy of the findings and recommendations will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Headmaster and Governors.

Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, this will be regarded as vexatious and outside the scope of this policy.

EYFS

- Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to ISI on request.
- If parents believe that the School is not meeting EYFS requirements ISI can be contacted on 020 7600 0100 or via e-mail concern@isi.net

Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them. A written record is kept of all complaints, whether they are resolved at the informal or formal stage of appeal hearing stage. In addition, a written record of any and all action taken by the school as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld, is kept.

Complaints which do not have safeguarding implications will be retained for a minimum of 7 years. Complaints regarding allegations of abuse will be preserved for the term of the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and until the accused has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation, if it is longer.

This policy is made available to parents on the main school website.

There was one Stage 2 complaint received by the Headmaster in the school year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.

There were no Stage 3 complaints received by the Chair of Governors in the school year from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.

This policy should be displayed in:

S:\SGW_Policy_and_Procedure_Index\SGJ Policies A-Z	http://www.stgeorgesweybridge.com/further-information/school-policies-
ISI Portal	https://dragonfly.stgeorgesweybridge.com/parent-information/concerns-and-complaints

Associated policies:

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Last reviewed: September 2021
Next review: September 2022

Policy owner: Headmaster