

# St George's School Windsor Castle Complaints Procedure



This policy is a whole school policy and covers the Kindergarten setting, Pre-Prep (Reception – Year 3) and Prep School (Years 4-8).

This document is available on the school website, staff handbook, and in the boarding house.

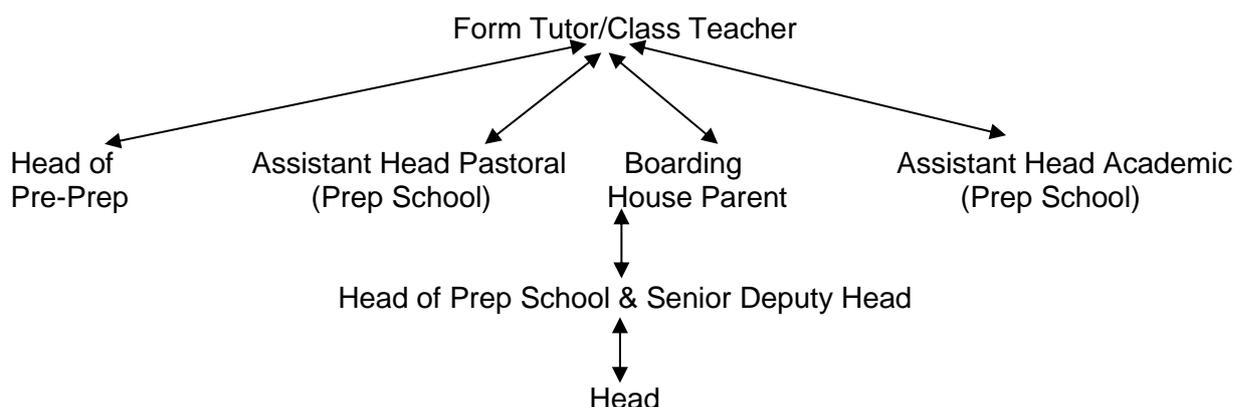
## Introduction

St George's celebrates the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be dealt with swiftly by the School in accordance with this Procedure.

As defined for the purposes of this Complaints Procedure, a complaint is any matter about which a parent of a pupil is unhappy and seeks action by the school, which will be handled according to the policy set out below. Written records of all complaints and the action taken as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld), whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, will be kept for a period of three years. After three years, the records will be destroyed, with a deletion record taken. Any complaints relating to safeguarding or child protection will be kept indefinitely. **All written complaints must be signed by the person making the complaint and all verbal complaints must be verified by name so that communication can be maintained between the school and the complainant. The school will not respond to or investigate any complaint which is anonymous or made on behalf of a third party.**

## Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- The School's structure of communication for parents is set out below. In the first instance for the vast majority of issues, parents should first contact their child's Class Teacher/Form Tutor. Thereafter, depending on the nature of the complaint, the lines of communication are as follows;



- In some circumstances, it might be appropriate to pass an issue to a Head of Department or Faculty Lead, and a more serious issue may be referred by the Class

Teacher/Form Tutor to the Head of Pre-Prep, an Assistant Head or Senior Deputy Head.

- Complaints made directly to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will usually be referred to the relevant Class / Form tutor, unless it is deemed appropriate for him / her to deal with the matter personally.
- The relevant member of staff will respond to parents within 48 hours of receiving the initial complaint from parents. A written record will be made of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received, action taken and whether the matter was resolved. Records are kept electronically and are reviewed at least annually to inform procedures. Should the matter not be resolved with the member of staff or in the event that the member of staff and the parent fail to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution then the matter will be escalated to a member of SLT. If the matter still remains unresolved, 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 Head. The Head will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint within 24 hours of receiving it. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In the majority of cases, the Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 3 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. So an accurate record of the conversations can be kept, the Head's PA will normally be asked to attend meetings to take minutes. If appropriate, another member of the SLT might attend meetings. Wherever possible, it is hoped that a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- Should it be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigation, complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 7 working days of the Head having received the complaint.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings, interviews and phone calls held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision either in writing or by telephone, whichever is deemed to be the more appropriate. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- 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 the parents believe the school is not meeting EYFS requirements ISI can be contacted on 0207 6000100 or via email [concern@isi.net](mailto:concern@isi.net)
- If parents are not satisfied with the decision, they have the right to proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure by writing to the Chair of Governors to request a further investigation.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors, who will consider their complaint by appointing a Complaints Panel.
- Once appointed by the Chairman, the matter will then be referred to this Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed on the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and leadership of the school. The Chairman will acknowledge the complaint in writing and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as possible and practicable such a period not exceeding 10 working days from receipt of the complaint (if during term time) or 20 working days (outside term time)
- 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 5 working days prior to the hearing.
- The parent(s) may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Parents may attend and be accompanied at a hearing but are not entitled to insist on legal representation.
- Wherever possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the panel will decide how the further investigation should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision within 7 working days of the first Hearing. **The decision of the Panel will be final.** The Panel's findings and any recommendations made will be sent electronically or otherwise to the complainant and, where relevant, the person or person about whom the complaint was made. Such findings will be made available for inspection on the school premises. (The report will be held securely in the Head's office).

### **Complaints about the Head Master**

If the complaint is against the Head Master, Parents should make their complaint directly to the Chair of Governors.

If the complaint is against the Head Master, the Chair of Governors will call for a full report from the Head Master and for all the relevant documents. The Chair of Governors may also call for a briefing from members of staff, and will in most cases, speak to, or meet with the Parents to discuss the matter further. Once the Chair of Governors is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, the Parents will be informed of the decision in writing. The Chair of Governors will give reasons for his decision.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records of all complaints will be kept confidential, but will be made available to any regulatory bodies (including ISI and Ofsted) or where the Secretary of State under Section 109 of the 2008 Education Act or any subsequent Acts requests access to them. A record of all complaints will be kept for a minimum of 3 years.

### **Complainants right to appeal**

ISI (The Independent Schools' Inspectorate) may be contacted at any stage for assistance or advice. Their purpose is to monitor the educational and social well-being of school children. ISI can be contacted by telephone on 020 7600 0100.

Complaints are resolved either to the complainant's satisfaction, or with an otherwise appropriate outcome which balances the rights and duties of pupils without unreasonable delay. Parents are not penalised for making a complaint in good faith.

Reviewed: **Jan 2021 WDJG**

Next review: **Jan 2022 Head**

**For ratification at Council March 2021 (Council approved: 18 March 2021)**

## **Appendix**

### **Number of complaints received**

The number of Level 3 complaints as defined in this policy in the preceding school year are shown below as required under the Independent Schools Standard Regulations.

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Number of Level 3 complaints</b>
2018/19	0
2019 / 20	0

### **Complaints received in relation to fees as a result of COVID-19**

This does not include complaints received in relation to the payment of fees as a result of COVID-19. As this doesn't fall within the complaints policy, any matters relating to fees are dealt with by the Business Director, Head, and the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

#### **Contact Details**

Head Master: Mr. William Goldsmith

Telephone Number: 01753 836 502

Email [headmaster@stgwindsor.org](mailto:headmaster@stgwindsor.org)

Chairman of Governors: Mr. Stanford

Email [ChairofGovernors@stgwindsor.org](mailto:ChairofGovernors@stgwindsor.org)

These contact details are secure both in term time and during school holidays.

In the case of wishing to complain to the Independent Schools' Inspectorate, who conduct regular inspections of the school, the contact details are as follows:

The Independent Schools Inspectorate

Telephone Number: 0207 600 0100

Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA

Boarding Parents may contact the National Standards Care Commission in the event that they have any concerns relating to their child's welfare.

Telephone number: 0207 210 4850