



# Complaints Policy

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# Executive Summary

## Audience

- a. **All members of staff** must read and familiarise themselves with all sections of this policy document.
- b. This policy is hosted on the school's website and is available to **all parents** and guardians.

## Key Points

- a. It is hoped that most issues, concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally;
- b. This policy outlines the people in school that parents should address any issues, concerns and complaints to in the first instance;
- c. Where complaints are unresolved at the informal stage, this policy outlines the procedure for (and actions that result from) making a formal complaint to the Principal and (if necessary) the procedure for requesting an official hearing by members of the Board of Governors;
- d. This policy outlines the procedures for making informal and formal staff complaints;
- e. This policy details the staffing, assessment and record-keeping demands associated with these procedures.



# Section 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Policy Statement

- a. St George's British International School prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils.
- b. If parents or members of staff do have a concern, issue or complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with this procedure.
- c. The policy of the school is to treat all concerns and complaints seriously and confidentially.
- d. This policy document applies to all concerns, issues and complaints from parents and members of staff other than those relating to Child Protection matters<sup>1</sup>. Child Protection issues are considered in a separate document (see **Child Protection Policy**).

## 1.2 Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- a. All concerns, issues and complaints are considered sympathetically, fairly and efficiently;
- b. All complaints are resolved as early as possible;
- c. All members of the school community are confident in the school's ability to safeguard its pupils and promote fair treatment of all members of the school community;
- d. Accurate records (including correspondence, minutes and statements) are routinely kept;
- e. All records are kept confidential within the parameters of this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF defines Child Protection as 'preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children'



## Section 2: Practice and Procedure

### 2.1 Parental Complaints

#### 2.1.1 Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

- a. It is hoped that most issues, concerns and complaints will be resolved **quickly** and **informally**.
- b. For a parental complaint involving a pupil in either **Junior School**:
  - a. Parents should contact their child's **class teacher** in the first instance;
  - b. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away;
  - c. If this is not the case, parents should consult with the **phase coordinator**;
  - d. If this still does not resolve the matter, parents should consult with the **Head of Junior School**;
  - e. The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of the complaint and the date on which they were received;
  - f. If the complaint is registered by email, the email should be acknowledged **within 24 hours** to explain that the complaint is being investigated;
  - g. Should the matter not be resolved **within seven days** or in the event that no satisfactory conclusion or resolution is reached, parents are advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.
- c. For a parental complaint involving a pupil in the Senior School:
  - a. For pastoral matters:
    - i. Parents should contact their child's **tutor** in the first instance;
    - ii. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away;
    - iii. If this is not the case, parents should consult with the **Head of Year**;
    - iv. If this still does not resolve the matter, parents should consult with the **Head of Senior School**;
    - v. The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of the complaint and the date on which they were received;
    - vi. If the complaint is registered by email, the email should be acknowledged **within 24 hours** to explain that the complaint is being investigated;



- vii. Should the matter not be resolved **within seven days** or in the event that no satisfactory conclusion or resolution is reached, parents are advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure.
- b. For curriculum matters
- i. Parents should contact their child's **subject teacher** in the first instance;
  - ii. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away;
  - iii. If this is not the case, parents should consult with the **Head of Department**;
  - iv. If this still does not resolve the matter, parents should consult with the **Head of Senior School**;
  - v. The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of the complaint and the date on which they were received;
  - vi. If the complaint is registered by email, the email should be acknowledged **within 24 hours** to explain that the complaint is being investigated;
  - vii. Should the matter not be resolved **within seven days** or in the event that no satisfactory conclusion or resolution is reached, parents are advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure (**section 2.1.2**).
- c. For a parental complaint involving support services (such as security, cleaning, buses, catering or facilities):
- i. Parents may raise their concern with the **Director of Finance and Operations** in the first instance;
  - ii. The person receiving the complaint will make a written record of the complaint and the date on which they were received;
  - iii. If the complaint is registered by email, the email should be acknowledged **within 24 hours** to explain that the complaint is being investigated;
  - iv. Should the matter not be resolved **within seven days** or in the event that no satisfactory conclusion or resolution is reached,



parents are advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this procedure (**section 2.1.2**).

### **2.1.2 Stage 2 - Referral to the Principal**

- a. Where complaints are unresolved at the informal stage (see **section 2.2.1**) a formal written notice of the complaint to the Principal using the following email address:

[complaints@stgeorge.school.it](mailto:complaints@stgeorge.school.it)

- b. This formal written notice should include the details outlined in **section 2.3** of this policy.
- c. The Principal will acknowledge receipt of the complaint **within 24 hours** and in most cases will meet or speak to the parents concerned to discuss the matter in more detail, normally within three working days of receiving the complaint.
- d. The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- e. Once the Principal 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 (normally **within seven working days** of the Principal receiving the complaint). The Principal will also give reasons for the decision and details of any next steps.

### **2.1.3 Stage 3 - Official hearing by the Board of Governors**

- a. If parents seeks to invoke Stage 3 of this policy (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution) they should write formally and confidentially to the Chair of the Board of Governors using the following email address:

[chair@stgeorge.school.it](mailto:chair@stgeorge.school.it)

- b. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge the complaint within three days of receipt and will convene a **Complaints Panel** from at least two and up to three school governors not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.



- c. The Chair of behalf of the Panel will schedule a **hearing** to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within **seven working days**.
- d. The person making the complaint can request to be accompanied to the panel hearing - this may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- e. The panel's decision will be final.

## 2.2 Staff Complaints

- a. It is hoped that most issues, concerns and complaints will be resolved **quickly** and **informally**.
- b. In most cases this will involve the member of staff referring their concern to their line manager or another senior member of the team (such as a member of the school's **Strategy Team**).
- c. In cases where a successful resolution cannot be achieved informally, members of staff should follow stages 2 (see **section 2.1.2**) and if necessary stage 3 (see **section 2.1.3**) of this policy to make a formal complaint.

## 2.3 Details to Include in a Formal Complaint

a	Your name
b	Your address
c	Your contact details (telephone number, mobile number and email address)
d	A detailed and accurate description of the nature of the complaint
e	Name(s) of people that the complaint has been reported to
f	Details of actions that have already been taken to resolve the complaint
g	A description of further actions that could be taken to deal effectively with the complaint
h	A description of measures that could be taken to avoid a repeat of your complaint



## 2.4 Summary Chart

### 2.4.1 Junior School Pupils

My concern is...	Pastoral	Curriculum	Support Services
For example...	<i>Behaviour, friendship issues, wellbeing</i>	<i>Teaching, learning, assessment, homework</i>	<i>Catering, cleaning, security, facilities, buses</i>
STAGE 1: INFORMAL	CLASS TEACHER (first)		DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
	Then... PHASE LEADER or DEPUTY HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL		
	Then... HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL		
STAGE 2: FORMAL	PRINCIPAL (via <a href="mailto:complaints@stgeorge.school.it">complaints@stgeorge.school.it</a> )		
STAGE 3: FORMAL	CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (via <a href="mailto:chair@stgeorge.school.it">chair@stgeorge.school.it</a> )		

### 2.4.2 Senior School Pupils

My concern is...	Pastoral	Curriculum	Support Services
For example...	<i>Behaviour, friendship issues, wellbeing</i>	<i>Teaching, learning, assessment, homework</i>	<i>Catering, cleaning, security, facilities, buses</i>
STAGE 1: INFORMAL	FORM TUTOR (first)	SUBJECT TEACHER (first)	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
	HEAD OF YEAR	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	
	HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL		
STAGE 2: FORMAL	PRINCIPAL (via <a href="mailto:complaints@stgeorge.school.it">complaints@stgeorge.school.it</a> )		
STAGE 3: FORMAL	CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (via <a href="mailto:chair@stgeorge.school.it">chair@stgeorge.school.it</a> )		

## 2.5 Group Complaints

It is not appropriate for parents to address complaints as a 'group' or for groups of parents to lobby the board over a certain matter. Concerns and complaints should be addressed individually by parents with reference only to their own children.



## Section 3: Assessment and Record Keeping

### 3.1 Stage 1

The class teacher, subject teacher, form tutor or senior leader should keep a copy of all salient correspondence or meeting minutes associated with an informal complaint or concern. The Principal will request access to all correspondence and a written summary in support of any investigation associated with a formal complaint.

### 3.2 Stage 2

The Principal will keep a written record of all formal resolutions and responses to formal complaints which will include:

1. A copy of all related correspondence between the parent(s) and the school;
2. Minutes of all meetings held in support of the investigation;
3. A copy of the final correspondence to parents confirming the outcome of the investigation.

### 3.3 Stage 3

The Chair of the Board of Governors (supported by the Clerk as necessary) will be responsible for record keeping associated with the convening of a Complaints Panel. This will include a written record of the outcome of the hearing.



## Section 4: Staffing and Resources

Post	Responsibilities
Class teachers, subject teachers, form tutors, middle and senior leaders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Working to support the successful resolution of informal concerns and complaints;</li> <li>2. Meeting the assessment and record-keeping requirements outlined in <b>section 3</b> of this policy.</li> </ol>
Principal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring the complaints@ email address;</li> <li>2. Ensuring a swift and effective response to any formal complaints the school receives;</li> <li>3. Investigating all complaints in a fair and compassionate manner;</li> <li>4. Respecting the confidential nature of formal parent and staff complaints;</li> <li>5. Meeting the assessment and record-keeping requirements outlined in <b>section 3</b> of this policy.</li> </ol>
Chair of the Board of Governors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring the chair@ email address;</li> <li>2. Convening a Complaints Panel and scheduling Panel Hearings;</li> <li>3. Respecting the confidential nature of formal parent and staff complaints;</li> <li>4. Meeting the assessment and record-keeping requirements outlined in <b>section 3</b> of this policy (with the support of the Clerk to the Board).</li> </ol>
Clerk to the Board	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supporting the Chair of the Board of Governors with meeting the assessment and record-keeping requirements outlined in <b>section 3</b> of this policy;</li> <li>2. Respecting the confidential nature of formal parent and staff complaints.</li> </ol>



## Section 5: Linked Policies

1. 201 Safeguarding Child Protection Policy
2. 202 Safeguarding Behaviour for Learning (Rewards and Sanctions) Policy
3. 208 Safeguarding Anti-Bullying Policy
4. 304 Human Resources Equal Opportunities Policy (**pending**)



## Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the **Principal** in **September 2022**.

### Approved by

The **Principal** on behalf of the school

The **Chair** on behalf of the Board of Governors

## Change History Record

Version Number	Description of Change	Author(s)	Date of Issue
1.1	Section 2.5 added at the request of the Board of Governors	DT	September 2019



**ST GEORGE'S**  
ROME