

## **COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction**

Stonyhurst has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. We welcome suggestions and comments from parents and take seriously any concerns you may have. These will be treated in a professional and appropriate manner in accordance with this Procedure.

### **Stage 1**

- 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 tutor. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult with a head of department or Playroom master/housemistress before responding to you.
- Complaints made directly to a head of department, a Playroom master/housemistress or one of the Deputy Heads may be referred to the relevant tutor unless the head of department, Playroom master/housemistress or Deputy Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The tutor will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within five working days or in the event that the tutor 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**

- If the complaint cannot be resolved as set out above, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headmaster. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- The Head will respond to the parents within 5 working days of receiving the complaint. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head 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. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision. Parents will be notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

### Stage 3

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chairman of Governors who may call a hearing of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to a Complaints 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. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the board of governors. The Chairman of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within 14 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 two days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. 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 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 to the parents, the Head, and the Chair of Governors and, where appropriate, the person complained about
- A written record will be kept of all complaints and at what stage they were resolved. These records will be kept for at least three years.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Parents can make a complaint to Ofsted, whose contact details are:

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
Telephone: 08456 40 40 45

Address: Ofsted National Business Unit  
Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square

Manchester  
M2 7LA

Our most recent report can be viewed on line at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

The School will provide Ofsted, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specific period, and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.