



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

St Hilda's welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may be raised. The following will show you how to use our complaints procedures.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all parents/guardians.

3. BACKGROUND

A complaint or grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived situation or outcome.

The dissatisfaction may be based on a perception that the School has:

- done something wrong, or
- failed to do something it should have, or
- acted unfairly or inappropriately.

4. DEFINITIONS

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response. We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint know how to do so
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate

5. LEGISLATION

Nil

6. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

School Community Code of Conduct
Privacy Policy

7. GUIDELINES

7.1 "How should I complain?"

When you contact the School, ask to speak to the appropriate staff member. If you are unsure who to speak to, be as clear as possible about what is troubling you and the receptionist will connect you to the relevant person.

Members of staff are happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, to raise academic or general progress with the Head of Year, sports concerns with the Head of Sport. They should be able to sort things out quickly. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff: Dean of Students, Dean of Curriculum, Head of Junior School or Principal.

7.2 “I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”

The School is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. It is better to raise issues early, before they become bigger. Contact a member of staff as described above.

7.3 “I am not sure whether to complain or not”

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should contact the School, as we are here to help.

7.4 “What will happen next?”

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately.

7.5 “What will happen next?”

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If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you as soon as possible to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

If you are not satisfied then an independent arbiter, by mutual agreement, can be utilised.

7.6 “What happens about confidentiality?”

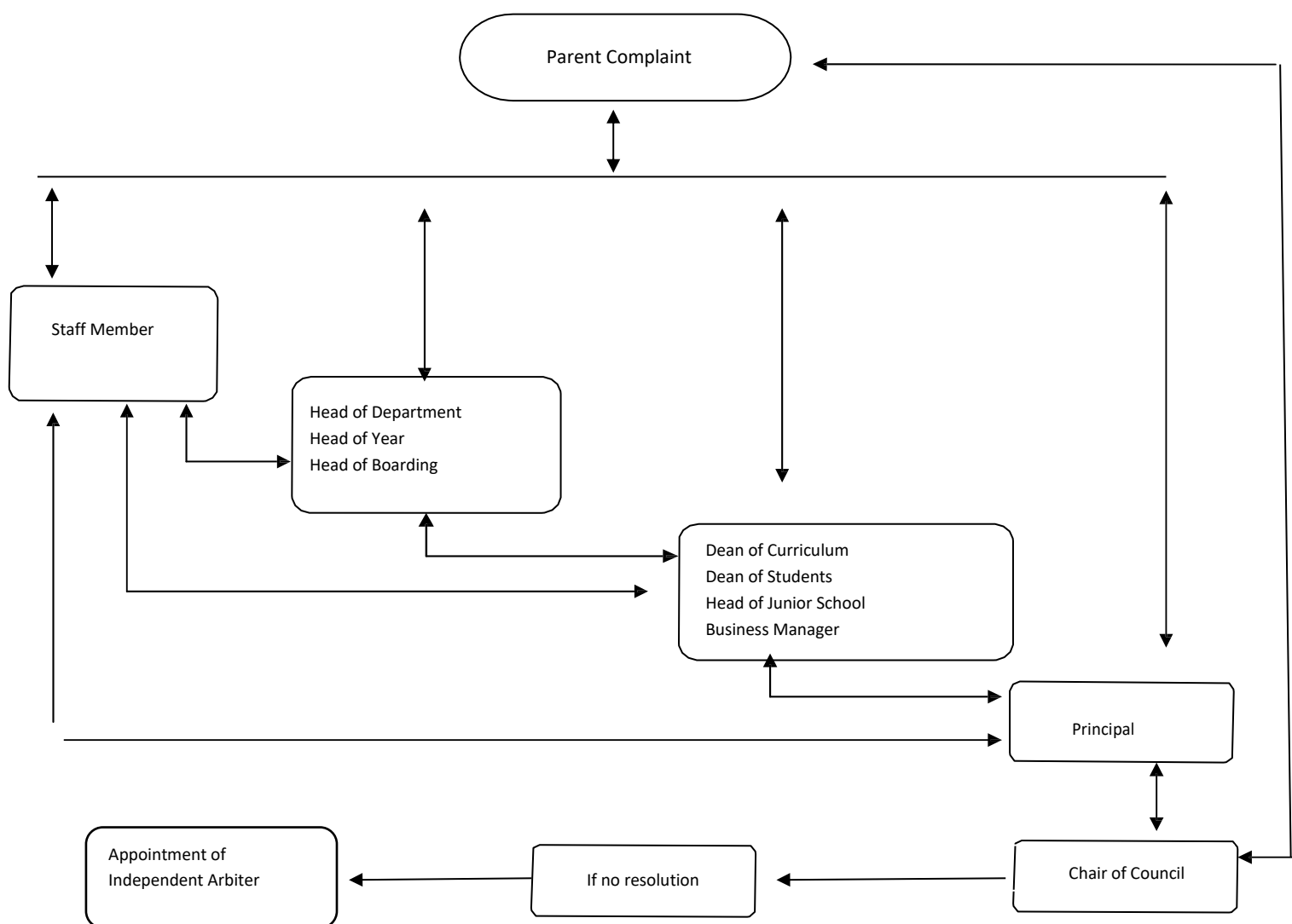
Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chair of the School Council may also need to be informed. It is the School’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

In some circumstances it may be necessary to make third parties outside the School aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it becomes necessary to refer matters to the police. You would be fully informed.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints might not be pursued.

Any action would be handled confidentially within the School.

Parental Complaints Procedures



- Stage 1: Complaint is resolved between parent and initial contact person
- Stage 2: Complaint is discussed by initial contact person with a more senior member of staff
- Stage 3: Meeting between parent, senior member of staff and/or initial contact person
- Stage 4: If no resolution, Principal involved
Another meeting set-up
Principal will involve the Chair of Council if required
- Stage 5: If parent is not satisfied with the outcome, then an independent arbiter, by mutual agreement, can be utilised.

NB: Should a dispute relate to an action or decision by the Principal, a parent may have direct access to the Council Chair

8. BREACH

If there is reason to believe the School has failed to comply with this policy, then an independent arbiter will investigate the circumstances.

Responsibility: Principal
Review Date: March 2017
Next Review Date: March 2018