



# SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

## HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

Each day we make many decisions and try hard to do our best for all our pupils. Your comments – either positive or negative – are helpful for future planning. You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of St George's which is not a complaint. Many parents pass on their ideas and thoughts informally to staff and we value their support. There are many opportunities for you to do this.

However, if you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, as explained in the School Prospectus and information given to you when your child joined the school, you have the right to complain.

## HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

### First

If you have a concern about anything we do or if you wish to make a complaint you can do this by telephone or in writing to your child's tutor. Our policy is that the first point of contact is the Tutor, then the Head of House. The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) can also be contacted if it is about special educational needs. You may want to come and talk to the Head of House – please remember that appointments are necessary as all staff have busy teaching schedules.

We hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and informally. If we are at fault we will do our best to put matters right: we may also provide you with an explanation as to how and why as professionals we have made a certain decision. Because our priorities are teaching and learning and all complaints should be investigated it may take some time for staff involved to look into the matter. Most issues are dealt with within 7-21 days. You will be told if it will take longer and the reasons for this. One of the Deputy Headteachers has responsibility for comments and complaints and you may wish to contact the designated Deputy. In a large secondary school there are various managers who will deal with pupil issues at different levels, and we will try to ensure that your issue is picked up by the most appropriate person. In the case of a Boarding issue this would be a senior member of boarding staff and ultimately the Director of Boarding; subject issues by the department concerned; exam issues by the examinations officer.

### Second

If the matter is not resolved with the staff directly responsible your next step would be to write to the Headmaster, who will ensure your complaint is investigated and will respond to you formally himself within 21 days.

Any teachers involved in complaints or comments will be fully briefed about them and may need to meet with you to discuss the matter: all correspondence is shared.

### **Third**

If you are still not satisfied you can complain formally by filling in a form, which is available from the Clerk to the Governors at the school. You can send this form to the Chairman of Governors, via the Clerk to the Governors at the school.

The Chairman will then arrange for your complaint to be investigated afresh and considered and will ensure you receive, within ten working days, a progress report that will also tell you what will happen next. When your complaint has been fully investigated you will be told of the outcome in writing.

Most complaints are the responsibility of the Governing Body of the School and will be resolved by them. A small number of complaints may not be resolved by this process. In the case of complaints about **Special Education Needs**, the **National Curriculum** or **Collective Worship**, in LEA maintained schools, you can complain further to the Local Education Authority's Chief Complaints Officer.

#### **The school will do its best to**

- Deal with the complaint honestly, politely and in confidence
- Look at your complaint thoroughly and fairly
- If your complaint is urgent we aim to deal with it quickly
- If it is complicated we aim to keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake, or if your complaint or aspects of it are found to be justified.
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right, or how we will learn from the outcome of any investigation to make sure it shouldn't happen again
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 28 working days. Please bear in mind that school holiday closures will delay the process as they are not working days. If a complaint is taking longer than 28 working days to investigate then you will be told.

There is a separate procedure for child protection issues. Please contact the Headmaster's PA (01582 765477) and ask to speak with the school's Child Protection Officer.

## Useful names and addresses

### **Chairman of Governors**

All correspondence for the Chairman should  
Be sent to the Clerk to the Governors at St  
George's School

**01582 716261**

### **County Councillor for your area**

Contact the members Secretariat at  
County Hall

**01992 556556**

### **Tim Hood**

#### **Complaints Manager**

Customer focus Team  
Children, Schools and Families  
County Hall  
HERTFORD  
Herts, SG13 8DF

**Helpline: 01992 588542**

### **Sue Jaye**

#### **Parent Partnership Co-ordinator**

(Special Educational Needs)  
Children, Schools and Families  
County Hall  
HERTFORD  
Herts, SG13 8DF

**Helpline: 01992 555847**

### **Paul Davies**

#### **Complaints Officer**

Conciliation Advice & Appeals Service  
Education Department  
County Hall  
HERTFORD  
Herts, SG13 8DF

**Helpline: 01992 588542**

**N.B. The County Council have no jurisdiction over most complaints because of St. George's  
Voluntary Aided status**