

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Date of Policy	November 2018
Approved by Principal	September 2018
Next Review Date	1 st November 2020
Lead for Review	Principal

Introduction

The College is committed to providing the best teaching and pastoral care it can for its students. It is hoped that any worries or complaints can be dealt with informally and directly through the Boarding & Welfare Team, Student Care Office, Personal Tutors, Operations Team and the 'Tell Us' Button. If not, the College has a formal complaints procedure. A complaint is any matter about which students, parents and stakeholders are unhappy and seek action by the College. Formal complaints are extremely rare, reflecting the good relationships between these parties that enable most matters to be resolved informally.

Separate procedures apply if a student has been expelled or has been asked to leave (Behavior Policy) or if a child protection issue has arisen (Safeguarding Policy).

For the purpose of this policy, a 'working day' is Monday to Friday during term time (excluding Summer Term 2 which is considered to be a holiday period due to the high volume of staff absences). Wherever possible we will endeavor to resolve complaints as quickly as possible regardless of whether it is term time. For a complaint received during the College holidays, the timescale for responding starts on the first day of the next term.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

For all matters in which you consider there is cause for a complaint, please address it initially to the Registrar's Team:

Registrar@catscanterbury.com

Tel: +441227 866556

The College will acknowledge your complaint within 2 working days and highlight the steps that will be taken in order to achieve a positive resolution. This will include reference to the personnel involved. The College will seek to provide you with a resolution within 5 working days of the complaint being received.

Stage One concerns can be raised up to three months after the date of the incident causing concern.

This process allows the complaint to be considered initially on an informal basis. If you are not satisfied with the response in Stage 1, you may escalate the complaint to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint in Stage 1 and wish to take the matter further, you should contact the Principal. Please be aware of the following points when taking your complaint to Stage 2:

You must be dissatisfied with the response you have received in Stage 1;

You must make your complaint in writing and stipulate that it is a 'Formal Complaint' escalating from Stage 1 to Stage 2;

You may ask a friend, relative or agent to help you with your communication or make it on your behalf.

Contact the Principal: The Principal
 c/o CATS Canterbury
 68 New Dover Road
 Canterbury, CT1 3LQ
Registrar@catscanterbury.com

Wherever possible the Principal will contact the parent within 5 working days of receiving the complaint in order to discuss the matter and achieve an acceptable resolution.

Where a resolution has not been reached, the Principal may ask a senior member of staff who has not been involved in the matter that is the subject of the complaint, to act as 'investigator'. The investigator may request additional information from the parent and may wish to speak to him or her and others who have knowledge of the circumstances. The outcome of the investigation will be reported to the Principal.

The Principal's decision and the reasons for it shall be given in writing and sent to the parent within 15 working days of the receipt of the complaint.

Written records will be kept of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

If you are not satisfied with the response in Stage 2, you may escalate the complaint to Stage 3.

Complaints raised about the Principal

Formal complaints about the Principal should be sent to the Managing Director CATS Colleges:

By post to: The Managing Director CATS Colleges, c/o CATS Canterbury, 68 New Dover Road
 Canterbury, CT1 3LQ

Or via e-mail to: registrar@catscanterbury.com, FAO Managing Director, CATS
 Colleges.

The Managing Director may deal with the complaint in the same manner as described for other complaints, or may recuse himself at this stage and pass the complaint to another Governor to be addressed in the first instance, so that the Managing Director is then free to sit on the panel in Stage 3 if necessary.

Stage 3 – Appeals Procedure and Panel Hearing

A parent may request a panel hearing by sending details of a complaint which they believe has not been resolved at Stage 2 within 7 days of the date of the Stage 2 decision to the Managing Director of CATS Colleges.

Please be aware of the following points when taking your complaint to Stage 3:

School by paragraph 33 of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014; where disclosure is required by the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

The record of complaints must state whether the complaint has been resolved following a formal procedure or whether it has proceeded to a panel hearing. It must also give details of the action taken by the school as a result of these complaints, regardless of whether the complaint has been upheld.

Records of complaints are available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Principal.

In accordance with data protection principles, details of individual complaints will be kept for as long as is considered to be reasonably necessary in the circumstances

Information on the number of formal complaints from the last school year is available upon request from Registrar@catscanterbury.com.