



**St. Anselm's College**  
*Edmund Rice Academy Trust*

# Parental Complaints Policy

## Version 1.3

**Mission Statement:**

Our Catholic Community offers a learning environment for us to develop our God given talents and to recognize Christ amongst us. We respect the dignity of God's creation and, inspired by Gospel values, seek to serve one another.

<b>Document Owner:</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>FGB</b>
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## **Policy statement on equality and diversity**

The College will promote equality of opportunity for students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds and ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, race, age, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

Equality and diversity are integral to the College's priorities and objectives. We will support inter-faith and inter-cultural understanding and engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement with society.

### **Introduction:**

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. The College is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing to resort to formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the College's formal complaints procedure. For the College to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year it will not be investigated.

The prime aim of St Anselm's College's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner. Malicious complaints may incur appropriate action by the College.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

### **St Anselm's College Complaints Policy has four main stages.**

In summary they are as follows:

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| Stage 1 | A concern is raised informally with a staff member.  |
| Stage 2 | Formal complaint is heard by an appropriate member of staff, usually a member of the Senior Leadership Team. |
| Stage 3 | Complaint is heard by h  |
| Stage 4 | Complaint is heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel.  |

#### **Stage 1 – Raising a concern**

Concerns can be raised with the College at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The College requests that parents make their first contact with the relevant teacher or Head of Year. On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case you will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, please write to or call the College within 10 term days. The College will then look at your complaint at the next stage.

#### **Stage 2 – Complaint heard by the appropriate Senior Leader or member of staff.**

Formal complaints shall be put in writing and addressed to **The Headteacher's Secretary** who will direct it to the appropriate Senior Leader. The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. The College will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 school working days of receiving it. In many cases this response will also report on the action the College has taken to resolve the issue. Alternatively, a meeting may be convened to discuss the matter further.

This meeting will normally take place within 10 term days. The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 2 please write to or call the College within 10 term days of receiving our response. You will need to inform us why you are still not satisfied.

### **Stage 3 – Complaint heard by Headteacher**

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the Headteacher will arrange further investigation. Following the investigation, the Headteacher may invite you to a meeting to discuss the matter and the investigations or provide a written response within 10 term days. If you are dissatisfied with the result at Stage 3, you should contact us within 10 term days of receiving the response.

### **Stage 4 – Complaint heard by the Governing Body’s Complaints Appeal Panel**

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then you should write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated Governor will convene a Complaints Panel which will consist of 3 members, one of whom is independent of the leadership and management of the College. The hearing will normally take place within 10 term days of the receipt of the written request for Stage 4 investigation.

The aim of the Appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the College and the complainant. All parties will be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing within 3 term days after the date of the hearing. The letter will also identify what you need to do if you wish to take the matter further.

**N.B.** In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Headteacher, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of a member of the Governing Body the member will be informed of the complaint.

### **The Governors Appeal Panel is the final College-based stage of the parental complaints process.**

In exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Ombudsman or Director of Education. Parents and carers can receive independent advice from both the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations and the Advisory Centre for Education, 1c Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ. Both organisations may offer advice but will not support individuals in pursuit of a complaint.

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

