



Statement of intent

St Edward's School aims to resolve all concerns and complaints at the earliest possible stage, and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout.

A complaint can be resolved or withdrawn at any stage.

Many concerns can be resolved informally, without the need to use the complaints procedure.

The welfare of any child concerned is paramount.

Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure applies to all parents/carers/those with parental responsibility of current pupils and former pupils but only where the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still on register. This policy also applies to volunteers who have concerns about the school.

Complaints procedure

A concern or complaint can be made in person, by telephone, in writing or electronically via email. They may also be made by a third party (such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau) acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

A template complaint form is included below. Please complete this if possible.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, or if a complainant commences legal action against St Edward's, the complaints procedure may be suspended until the other process is complete.

Information about a complaint will not be disclosed to a third party without written consent from the complainant.

Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints.

Time scales

Complaints are expected to be made as soon as possible after an incident arises to amend the issue in an appropriate timescale.

You must raise the complaint within one month of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within one month of the last of these incidents. Complaints made outside this time limit may be considered in exceptional circumstances. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints other than those that are dealt with under other procedures, including those listed below.

- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
Karen Thorne, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be contacted. Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.

If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact Hampshire's local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

- Whistleblowing
We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.
- Staff grievances
Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.
- Staff conduct
Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.

Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.

Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, this should be confirmed in writing (including email).

The Process

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with the member of staff responsible for the area or action you are concerned about. If your concern is more serious you may prefer to raise it with a Year Manager or Assistant Head (Pastoral). All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem promptly at this informal stage. Most concerns and potential complaints can best be resolved through informal discussion.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, you may be referred to another staff member.

If the concern remains unresolved, you should make a formal complaint.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

Complaints are made against the school, not against individuals. Individuals may be involved, which will determine how the complaint is dealt with. Formal complaints must be addressed to the Headmaster. This may be done in person, in writing or by email (preferably on the complaint form), or by telephone.

The Headmaster will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, and what outcome the complainant would like to see.

The Headmaster may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team or ask a member of the Board of Governors to investigate. Exceptionally, an independent third party might be asked to investigate to establish the facts, but will not determine how the complaint is resolved.

The Headmaster, or the person nominated to investigate will provide a formal written response, if possible within 21 days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

The response will summarise the complaint, set out briefly the facts found, and where appropriate, action the school will take to resolve the complaint.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they should seek advice as to how to proceed further. Participation in this complaints procedure should not affect their legal rights.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made, the school will adhere to Part 7 of the Independent School Standards, as follows:

(e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;

(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;

(h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;

(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is—

(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and

(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;

(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and—

(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and

(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Contact Details

Headmaster: Mr G Maher

Address: St Edward's School, Melchet Court, Sherfield English, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 6ZR

Contact number: 01794 885252

Chair of the Board of Governors: Mr MH Tennant c/o address as above.

Clerk to the Board of Governors: Mrs A Homewood, address as above.

Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss K Thorne, address as above.

OFSTED (Social Care): 0300 123 1231

This review: GM/SH November 2023

Complaint Form

If you have tried unsuccessfully to resolve your complaint under Stage 1 and wish to take the matter further, please complete this form and send it to the Headmaster.

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| Name: | |
| Pupil's name (if relevant): | |
| Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant): | |
| Address: | Day time telephone number: |
| Postcode: | Evening telephone number: |
| What is your complaint? | |
| When did you discuss your concern/complaint with the appropriate member of staff and what was the result of this discussion? | |
| What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage? | |
| Are you attaching any paperwork? If yes, please give details | |
| Signature: | Date: |

| Official use | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Complaint received by: | Date: |
| Acknowledgement sent by: | Date: |
| Complaint referred to: | Date: |