



# Complaints Procedure

Co ordinator: Mr D. Hood  
Updated:September 2022  
Next Review September 2023

St Joseph's Preparatory School Complaints Procedure  
This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS

The Governing Body of St Joseph's Preparatory School understands its regulatory responsibilities and will maintain an effective oversight of this policy, by evaluating its effectiveness, and reviewing and implementing change.

This policy is made available to parents of pupils (meaning current registered pupils) on the School's website [www.stjosephsprepschool.co.uk](http://www.stjosephsprepschool.co.uk) and is available for inspection on the School's premises during the day. The complaints procedure does apply to past pupils but only if the complaint was initially raised when the pupil was still registered and it does not cover exclusions unless the school has indicated otherwise. All concerns will be treated as complaints and therefore covered by this policy. (See Appendix 1 for a flow chart of proceedings)

St Joseph's Preparatory School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this procedure.

### **Stage 1 – Informal Resolution**

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their child's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headteacher.

Complaints made directly to the Headteacher will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Headteacher deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally. Any written complaint made about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of such a complaint must be made available to OFSTED and ISI on request.

The Form Teacher will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within two weeks or in the event that the Form Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

### **Stage 2 – Formal Resolution**

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Headteacher within 14 days of the lack of resolution

from Stage One of this procedure. The Headteacher will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headteacher will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally within 7 working days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

It may be necessary for the Headteacher to carry out further investigations.

The Headteacher will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headteacher is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing within 21 days. The Headteacher will also give reasons for her decision.

Appeals process: If parents are still not satisfied with the decision they should proceed to Stage Three of this procedure. This should occur within 30 days of receiving the Headmaster's response to the formal complaint.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to Mrs L Atherton, Chair of the Governing Body, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the Complaints Panel.

The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of who shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Suitable panel members would likely be people who have held a position of responsibility and are used to scrutinizing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments. Examples of persons likely to be considered would be serving or retired business people, civil servants, heads or senior members of staff at other schools, people with a legal background and retired members of the Police Force. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Trustees. The Trustees Representative, Ms R Maguire, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint, and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable, normally within 21 days.

All parties should submit all necessary documentation to be referred to at the panel hearing no later than 5 working days prior to the hearing. Late documentation will not be considered.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate and parents are not entitled to insist on this. Should the parent decide not to attend the hearing, the panel should still consider the parent's complaint in his/her absence and issue findings on the substance of the complaint thereby bringing the

matter to a conclusion. This requirement to proceed does not prevent the School from accommodating parental availability for dates or considering comments concerning the composition of the panel

The Panel will consider the full merits of the complaint.

If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.

Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 21 days of the Hearing. The Panel will either write to the parents or send their findings by electronic mail or otherwise give to the complainant by hand the recommendations and decisions and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and recommendations, if any, will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headteacher, the Governors and, where relevant, the person who is the subject of the complaint. The Panel's findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Governors and the Headteacher.

In relation to these complaints, schools are required to record whether they are then resolved at that stage or proceed to a panel hearing. The School will also keep a written record of any complaints that are dealt with under Stage 2 of the process and any action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). The panel will make available a copy of any findings and recommendations for inspection on the School premises by the proprietor and the Headteacher.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. In light of the Covid pandemic, it is recognised that there may be some flexibility required to timeframes contained within this policy to allow for extenuating circumstances for parents to escalate their complaints or indeed for the school to respond in light of disruption at school such as staff absence or lockdown

### **Arrangements for Record Keeping and Confidentiality**

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act (Education and Skills Act 2008) requests access to them, or where any other legal obligation prevails. Complaints not involving safeguarding implications will be retained for a minimum of 7 years at the College. Where there is a safeguarding angle, complaints must be preserved for the term of the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pensionable age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer.

If a complaint has been considered by at all three stages of the policy, there is no further recourse within the scope of the policy. Any repeated attempt by a parent to raise the same complaint is therefore outside the scope of the policy.

Written complaints relating to the requirements under the statutory framework for EYFS:

Any written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements must be investigated and the complainant notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days.

St Joseph's Preparatory School will provide Ofsted and ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint. All paper work relating to the complaint will be kept for three years and will be made available for Inspection on the school's premises by Christian Brothers, Governors or the Headteacher.

Parents may refer to Ofsted and ISI if they feel that their complaints have not been met appropriately. Contact details:

The Independent Schools Inspectorate – email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net) ;  
telephone: [020 7600 0100](tel:02076000100)

OFSTED – email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) ; telephone: 0300 123 4666

**Stage 4 – Monitoring and Review**

The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints procedure, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. In order to ensure that the Complaints procedures are effective, efforts are taken to identify any patterns or trends in the causes of complaints, the complaints log is reviewed termly by the Headteacher

*St. Joseph's Preparatory School has received no formal complaints during the academic year 2021-2022(the School defines formal complaints as those matters which are unable to be resolved by the first two stages of the Complaints Procedure)*



St Joseph's Preparatory School  
Log Sheet for Complaints

Name of Complainant:

Date Complaint Received:

Brief Description of Complaint:  
Please attach more information as necessary

Action taken to resolve Complaint:

Complaint Resolved  
YES / NO

If No, please include what other action has been taken:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1: Flowchart of Proceedings

