

## 2.37 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

<b>Date of Development</b>	September of each school year
<b>Review Date</b>	Annually or as is appropriate. A schedule for the review of this and all other policy documents is incorporated in the school development plan.
<b>This document is a statement of aims, principles and procedure for the parents of pupils at Frewen College.</b>	

This is a summary of the School's Complaints Procedure.

We want to ensure that all our pupils get the best out of their time in school. We want them to learn, to participate in activities in school and to enjoy their education. If things go wrong, it is important that you get in touch with us immediately, especially if you wish to complain or express a concern. If there is a problem, you should speak first to:

**THE SUBJECT TEACHER** if the problem concerns: \* your child's work in a particular subject  
\* homework set in a subject.

or

**THE FORM TUTOR** if the problem concerns: \* your child's behaviour  
\* another pupil's behaviour towards your child.

or

**THE HEAD OF YEAR** if the problem concerns: \* your child's general progress  
\* a disciplinary matter  
\* a problem about reports.

If you are not satisfied or consider the matter more serious, please contact

**Mr S Squires** if the problem concerns: \* the curriculum (ie the subjects taught)  
(Assistant Head Teacher (Curriculum)) \* options (Year 9 or 11)  
\* your child's progress in a subject or subjects  
\* the teaching of a member of staff  
\* the standard of teaching  
\* examinations or examination results.

**Mr N J Oddy** if the problem concerns: \* a disciplinary matter or the behaviour  
(Deputy Head) of pupils  
\* the behaviour of a member of staff or non-teaching staff  
\* school arrangements or procedures.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Mr or Mrs Sage</b> if the problem concerns:<br>(Joint Heads of Boarding)          | * boarding arrangements or issues.                     |
| <b>Mr J Field / Mrs C Browning</b> if the problem concerns:<br>(Accounts Department) | * fees<br>* payments for extras.                       |
| <b>Ms L Segura</b> if the problem concerns:<br>(SENCO)                               | * statementing process<br>* special educational needs. |

**If you are still not satisfied with any of the above, please contact the Principal, Mrs Linda Smith**

If your complaint is against the Principal then please contact the Chairman of Governors, **Mr John Maudslay**. You can obtain his address from the school office 01797 252494.

You are welcome to come into school at any time, but in order to ensure that the person you wish to see is free, please make an appointment so that he/she can give you the necessary time.

All pupils have the right to access the complaints procedure of the placing authority. This information is contained in the pupil handbook.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Some questions answered**

1. **Do I have to become involved in the Complaints Procedure whenever I raise a concern with the school?**  
**No.** The school has established methods for responding to concerns, queries, worries and problems of pupils and parents or others acting on their behalf, whether they be about the standard of teaching or non-teaching staff employed at the school, the conduct or actions of pupils or the conduct of the Governing Body. The majority of concerns etc will continue to be resolved at this initial stage either by discussion or correspondence with members of the Teaching Staff, often the Head of Department or Year Tutor.
2. **When does a concern become a formal complaint?**  
This will happen when a concern raised and dealt with at the initial stage has failed to produce a satisfactory resolution. This will trigger the option of following the complaints procedure. It should be said that the complaints procedure is not intended to replace the existing methods used at the initial stage. It will provide a means for dealing with those rare occasions when established routes have been exhausted and the complaint needs to be made formal.
3. **Who can complain?**  
Any concerned adult can complain. The complainant is usually someone who has been allegedly wronged or a parent, guardian or carer of a child who has been so wronged.
4. **If I pursue the complaints procedure will this disadvantage me or the pupil I am representing?**  
Please be assured that this will not be so. We believe that a key sign of quality in our school is willingness to listen to criticism and challenge from the users of the school services. It is by this route that the school can improve in areas where we might otherwise be unaware that there were problems.

## **THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The following are the stages for handling formal complaints.

### **1. INFORMAL STAGE: DECISION MAKER: DEPUTY HEAD**

- a) The complaint can be written or made by telephone or in person or by someone acting on the complainant's behalf. Whatever route is used there should be a clear record of what is being complained about and the complainant's desired outcomes and possibilities of redress.
- b) The Deputy Head will discuss the matter with any other staff who have been involved and the complainant.
- c) There will be an attempt to resolve the complaint quickly and informally, if possible within ten school days.
- d) If it is not possible to reach a satisfactory resolution the school and/or the complainant can decide to move to Stage 1: the Formal Complaint or perhaps to any other route if appropriate.

### **2. STAGE 1: FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE PRINCIPAL**

- a) The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing if he or she has not already done so. The aim is to ensure that the subject matter of the complaint is clear together with the desired outcome.
- b) The complaint will be acknowledged within ten school days and an indication given of the timescale for a fuller response. There will also be an opportunity at this stage to discuss further the desired outcomes and possibilities of redress.
- c) The Principal will undertake an investigation and record the findings.
- d) The Principal will report to the complainant with an explanation or redress within fifteen school days of acknowledgement of the complaint.
- e) If the complainant is not satisfied he or she can decide to move to Stage 2.

### **3. STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE GOVERNING BODY'S COMPLAINTS PANEL**

- a) The complainant will be asked to confirm that the substance of the complaint has not changed.
- b) The Governing Body's Complaints Panel will be set up for a meeting within ten school days of receipt of the complaint ensuring that the Governors on the panel have not been involved in the matter at an earlier stage. The panel will consist of two Governors and one person who is independent of the management and running of the school.
- c) Documentation will be invited beforehand from both the Principal or Business Manager and the complainant ensuring that both parties are aware of the documentation to be considered by the Complaints Panel.

- d) Parents must be allowed to attend and be accompanied by a friend or relative to a panel hearing if they wish. Both parties will in turn be asked to explain their case. Although the procedure is a matter for the Panel Chairman it will generally be in the following order:
- i. The School's case
  - ii. The complainant's case
  - iii. Summing up by the school
  - iv. Summing up by the complainant

During the course of the hearing both parties will be entitled to ask questions of the other and so too the members of the Complaints Panel.

- e) The Panel will report their decision within five school days of the meeting including an explanation, recommendations or redress measures if appropriate and the rationale for their decision. The complainant, Principal, and, where relevant the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations.
- f) Written records must be kept of all complaints and their outcomes, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stages, when a complaint is submitted in writing, or whether they proceed to a panel hearing.
- g) All records are strictly confidential and are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Principal's office.

If the complaint remains unresolved the complainant can be advised of possible routes, eg Department for Children, Schools and Families, or Ombudsman.