



# SILCOATES

Independent education for boys and girls aged 3-18

## Complaints Procedure – Parents

### Introduction

Silcoates 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 policy, which is made available to all parents and prospective parents – in the Information Handbook for Parents, which is on the website and available as a hard copy from the respective school offices on request. The School keeps written records of complaints, and notes whether they are resolved at Stage 2 below or through a panel hearing.

### 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 son/daughter's Class Teacher (Pre-School/Junior School) or Form Tutor (Senior School). In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher or Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Head of Junior School, a Head of Department, one of the Leadership Team or the Headmaster.

Complaints made directly to the Head of Junior School, a Head of Department, one of the Leadership Team or the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher or Form Tutor unless he/she deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.

The Class Teacher or Form Tutor 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 ten working days or in the event that the Class Teacher or Form Tutor 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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headmaster will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within five 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations.

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

Once the Headmaster 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. The Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

### **Stage 3 – Panel Hearing**

If parents seek to invoke Stage 3, following a failure to reach an earlier resolution, they will be referred to the Chairman of Governors, 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 whom shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Chairman of Governors, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within ten working days.

If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than three working days prior to the hearing.

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.

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 ten working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Headmaster, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of. A copy of the Panel's findings will be available for inspection on the school premises by the Chairman of Governors and the Headmaster.

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 for Education or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Education Act requires access to them.

Written records are kept of all complaints made in writing, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a panel hearing, along with the action taken by the School as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Additional requirements apply for EYFS settings beyond those which apply to the main school. Written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will always be investigated and the complainant notified within 28 days. The records of complaints will always be available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

Date of last review:	January 2018
Reviewed by:	P.C.Rowe - Headmaster