

PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS (Amended January 2010)

The International College is committed to providing the best education and boarding School experience it can for its students. The College welcomes communication with parents and, although we hope that you are very happy with the way we look after your son or daughter (or ward) we accept that there may be occasions when you need to express a concern or make a complaint. We take all such correspondence seriously, doubly so because we know our parents not only have placed their trust in the College but also live far away.

We strongly encourage parents and guardians to see if they can solve any problem or issue informally before making a formal complaint, by raising the problem with the member of staff most directly concerned. We are very much committed to working together with parents.

Procedure:

1. The College website clearly identifies the senior officers to whom complaints or concerns can be addressed by parents, staff or students and it is anticipated that most complaints to the College will be settled in an informal way by the officers most directly involved eg, House staff, Vice-Principal etc. There is a clear 'chain of command' within the College which would enable parents or guardians to appeal to a higher authority if they are not satisfied with the decision made by their initial approach. For examples, teachers' decisions may be queried with Heads of Department, their decisions with the Vice-Principal and the Vice-Principal's decision with the Principal. House Tutors' decisions may be queried with the Housemaster/mistress, and his or her decision can be queried with the Vice-Principal, and the Vice-Principal's with the Principal.
2. Members of staff are at liberty to refer decisions to the next level of authority if they are uncomfortable with taking a decision which may be problematic for some reason.
3. If parents or guardians are not happy with the decision made by the Principal, the complaint can be made formal by putting it in writing to the Chairman of the College Governors, Major General Patrick Cordingley. The letter containing the written complaint should be directed to the Chairman c/o International College. The envelope should be marked 'Private and Confidential'.
4. When the Chairman of Governors receives such a complaint in writing (if the Chairman cannot resolve the matter himself) he will convene a meeting of a panel of three persons, including himself (unless he was directly involved in some way with the decision prior to this stage) and at least one who will be independent of the management and the running of the College. None of the three panel members will be or have been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.
5. The Chairman of Governors will undertake to inform parents and the College Principal of the details of the meeting of the panel, inviting them to attend and be accompanied if necessary, at the panel's meeting.
6. The panel may invite any person against whom a complaint has been made, or any other relevant person to attend all or part of its meetings.
7. The panel is empowered to make findings and recommendations as appropriate. All those involved in the original decision (complainant, Principal, and any other person directly involved with the complaint), will be given a copy of any findings and recommendations.
8. The College will keep a written record of all complaints which are considered by the Principal, or are referred to a panel and each complaint will be reported to the College Governors at their next meeting.
9. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential (in as far as this is permitted by law) by the College, except where the College is compelled to share them with any appropriately legally-empowered personnel. The decision and findings of the panel relating to any complaint may be inspected by the Principal and Chairman of Governors at any time.
10. Timescales: The Principal will aim to give a decision on any complaint referred to him in writing within one week; the Chairman of Governors will undertake to convene a panel meeting, hear evidence, take a decision, and communicate that to parents, guardians, Principal and anyone else involved in the complaint, in writing, within five weeks from the date of the complaint, in writing, being received by the Chairman.

11. Should, at any time, parents/guardians become worried about the welfare of a student and feel that the College is not dealing with the matter seriously, the parent/guardian may contact Ofsted (telephone (UK +44) (0)845 640 4040)
12. The College keeps a record of complaints and will be able to inform any interested person of the number of complaints that proceeded to the formal stage for each year. Last year (2008/9) the number was nil.

Created 09.12.05

Amended 30.01.06 and 27.05.09

Latest amendment by Christopher Greenfield on 04.01.10. following consultation with Philip Hardaker.

Further amended 16.01.10 by CJG and PAH.

mtadmin/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 16.01.10