

# SANDS SCHOOL – COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We aim to provide an education that puts the child at the heart of the education process. Arising out of that we offer an approach to school life that shares responsibility with the student, not to the exclusion of the parent, but in such a manner that clearly values the student voice in school life, above that of the parent or guardian.

The principles were arrived at as a result of discussions between staff and students, but it needs to be stressed with regular input from the parent body, who are encouraged to question our approach to learning. Though less involved than in other schools, we view the parents as an essential element in the evolution of the school and believe that they and their children are entitled to sincere and prompt attention to their needs and wishes, and as a matter of course are entitled to transparent systems through which to air their grievances and concerns.

## Making Your Concerns Known

### PARENTS

- Stage 1. A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the school's provision should first talk to the school secretary who will then direct the parent to the appropriate member of staff or take their concern to the next staff meeting (held on Thursday evenings)
- Stage 2. If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within 2 weeks, or if the problem recurs, **the parent should put their concerns or complaint in writing** and request a meeting, with the school administrator or the chair of governors. Parents and the school representative/s could have a neutral person present if required to arbitrate and a written record of the discussion will be made and copies given to the parents, proprietors and headteacher, and person complained about if relevant. It is our intention to complete this process within 4 weeks.
- Stage 3. If the parents are not satisfied with the response at stage 2, there is provision for the establishment of a hearing with a panel of 3 people who are not directly involved with the matters in the complaint who have been appointed by the proprietor. This would normally include the chair of governors and the school counsellor. There is on request an independent person appointed by the school who will be available to play a role in this process.
- The panel will be requested and authorised by the proprietor to make findings and recommendations and a copy of these will be given to the complainant, the proprietors, the headteacher and if relevant, the person complained about.

- All correspondence and records of any complaint will be kept confidential and stored within the school. They will indicate whether the matter was resolved at the first meeting or whether it went to a panel hearing and will be available for showing the inspectors and copies made available to the registering authority on request.

## STUDENTS

- A student who is uneasy about any aspect of the school's provision should first talk to their tutor and use the school council and/or school meeting depending on the severity and type of concern.
- If this doesn't have a satisfactory outcome within three weeks the child, via the parent may use the system above.

### Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

The Sands School takes its responsibility of care for its students seriously and we recognise that any possibility that a member of staff may have hurt a student must be investigated thoroughly, but in a way that does not prejudice either the student or the member of staff. **Allegations of abuse against staff will be dealt with under a separate procedure which involves the local authority social services.**

Any allegation of abuse of a student by a member of staff should be made to the designated school Child Protection Officer, Nathan Gribble. Should the allegation be against the Child Protection Officer than it should be made to the Chair of Governors, Donald Barr.