

## Complaints Procedure - IB and Pre-IB courses

At St. Clare's we are proud of our friendly and open atmosphere and our tolerance and respect of each other's differing views. If you have any questions or complaints, we would like to hear about them as soon as possible so they can be resolved to the satisfaction of individuals and the community. We prefer if complaints can be dealt with in an informal and friendly manner by the individuals involved. If this is not possible then the procedure detailed below should be used.

This policy may be used by students and parents who have complaints they wish to resolve.

### The principles:

1. Where possible we will handle complaints in confidence.
2. We will not take action against anyone who makes a reasonable complaint.
3. All relevant facts will be established and examined fairly before any action is taken.
4. We understand that in some situations people do not *intend* to offend others; instead they are misunderstood.
5. Students may take complaints, problems or concerns to any member of staff.
6. The following people have a particular responsibility to listen to and to try and resolve complaints:
  - Personal Tutors
  - Wardens
  - Assistant Principals
  - Vice Principals
  - Principal

### The practice:

#### Step 1 Act immediately and either

- speak directly to the person responsible if you feel able to do this **OR**
- ask a friend to speak to the person responsible on your behalf, without you being there

#### Step 2 If your complaint is not resolved

- talk to your personal tutor for advice on what to do
- ask your personal tutor to speak to the person responsible on your behalf
- ask your personal tutor to speak to an Assistant Principal or a Vice Principal on your behalf
- if your complaint is about your personal tutor then speak to the Assistant Principal, Pastoral

The member of staff to whom the complaint is referred will investigate it and respond within one week.

#### Step 3 If your complaint is not resolved it may be necessary to make a formal complaint in writing

- address your complaint to the Vice Principal (or to the Principal if you are complaining about the Vice-Principal).

The complaint will be investigated, dealt with and a response made including a written report, within 28 working days.

**Step 4 If you are not satisfied with St. Clare's response to the written complaint, please contact the Principal who will organise the following process:**

1. a hearing before a panel appointed on behalf of St. Clare's Governors, consisting of three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, will be arranged;
2. one person on this panel will be independent of the management and running of the school;
3. parents may attend and be accompanied to a panel hearing if they wish;
4. the panel may make findings and recommendations. The complainant, Chair of Governors and Principal, and where relevant the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations;
5. a written record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary written stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

Step four will take place within 3 weeks of your contact with the Principal.

**What complaints are covered by this procedure?**

**All complaints** are covered by this basic procedure, e.g.:

- related to your academic performance or to your life outside of the classroom
- involving your interaction with other students or with adult members of staff
- related to College procedures and facilities

Further advice is contained in the College Regulations for IB and Pre-IB students, Anti-bullying Policy, Health Policy.

Please note that all correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the 2002 Act requests access to them.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is responsible for inspections of independent schools including boarding inspections under the National Minimum Boarding Standards.

They may be contacted through [www.isi.net/contact/](http://www.isi.net/contact/) or telephone 020 7600 0100.

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection is Barry Armstrong and he can be contacted at (01865) 810603.

All written complaints are recorded and filed by the Vice Principal together with written responses or records of verbal responses.

Number of written complaints in academic year 2013 - 14: 7

This policy is reviewed annually.

**Most recent review/amendment**  
**ST June 14**