

S. Anselm's School



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INTRODUCTION

At S. Anselm's, we take great pride in the high standards of our teaching and pastoral care. However, we recognise that from time to time, parents, pupils, or members of staff may have concerns or complaints. When this occurs, individuals can expect the matter to be treated seriously and handled in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

A **concern** is generally defined as *an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered important, for which reassurances are sought.*

A **complaint** is typically recognised as *an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken—or not taken—by the School.*

It is in everyone's best interest for concerns and complaints to be resolved as early as possible. Many issues can be dealt with informally, without the need for formal procedures. Informal concerns should be taken seriously, and every effort made to resolve them quickly and effectively.

However, there may be occasions where a concern cannot be resolved informally, and the complainant wishes to raise the issue formally. In such cases, the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

This policy outlines three key areas:

- **The Parents' Complaint Procedure**
- **Staff Concerns: The Whistleblowing and Grievance Procedures**
- **The Pupils' Complaint Procedure**

A written record will be maintained of all complaints, including details of whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a formal panel hearing.

These procedures apply to all areas of school life, including academic matters, pastoral care, boarding & health and safety. For concerns about Safeguarding matters refer to the procedures within the school's Safeguarding Policy.

PARENTS' COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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 Form Tutor/House Parent. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Tutor/ House Parent cannot resolve this matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult a senior member of staff such as a Deputy Head or Head of Department or the Head.

- Complaints made directly to a senior member of staff /the Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form Tutor/House Parent unless the senior member of staff/the Head deem it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Tutor/Houseparent will make a **record of all serious concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received**. Should the matter not be resolved within one week or in the event that the Form Tutor/Housemaster/Housemistress 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.
- In the EYFS, any parental concerns about any aspect of the setting's provision should, in the first place, speak about his/her concerns with their Early Years class teacher.

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 Head. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet the parents concerned, normally (during term time) **within five 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 Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head 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 Head will also give reasons for his decision.
- The same applies within the EYFS. In addition, written complaints must be investigated relating to their fulfilment of the EYFS requirements and complainants notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The record of complaints must be made available to Ofsted and ISI as necessary.
- EYFS providers must make available to parents/carers details of how to contact Ofsted if they believe the provider is not meeting EYFS requirements. The following details are displayed on our EYFS notice board:
0300 123 4666 or e mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk. Postal address: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.
- ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) can be contacted at concerns@isi.net or on 020 7600 0100.
- Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board can also be contacted on 01629 533190, (out of hours 01629 532600), ddscp@derby.gov.uk or online [referral](#).

- **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 one of the school Governors, who has been appointed by the Chair of 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 Chairman of the Board of Governors.** The Governor on behalf of the Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 10 days.**
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied to all parties not later than two 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 7 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 Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.**
- The School aims to resolve complaints to the complainant's satisfaction. Where this is not possible, the outcome will balance the rights and needs of all parties concerned.
- Where repeated attempts are made by a parent to raise the same complaint after it has been considered at all three stages, the School may, at its sole discretion, regard any such complaint as vexatious and outside the scope of this policy.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Record keeping

Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requires access to them.

Complaints received

Number of formal complaints reaching panel hearing under this process for the academic period 2024-2025 is Zero. The number of complaints reaching Level 2 is Zero. The school records complaints in a 'Complaints Book' kept locked in the school office. This states whether complaints are resolved following a formal procedure or a panel hearing as well as outlining actions taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless whether they are upheld).

STAFF CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

At S. Anselm's, we value a culture of openness, transparency, and accountability. We recognise that staff who raise concerns are a vital asset to the organisation, helping to maintain the highest standards of integrity and safety. Staff are therefore encouraged to refer to the School's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure** should they have any concerns.

Whistleblowing involves an employee raising a concern about suspected wrongdoing, risk, or malpractice they have observed in the workplace, particularly where it may affect others' safety or well-being.

The designated individual to receive disclosures under this procedure is:

Chair of the Trustees – Emma Harrison

If the concern relates specifically to **Safeguarding or Child Protection**, including low-level concerns, the procedures outlined in the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** must be followed instead.

If a concern relates to a **personal grievance or employment issue**, rather than whistleblowing, the staff member should refer to the **Grievance Policy** for the appropriate process to follow.

PUPIL'S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Sometimes a child may feel that they would like to complain about something that is worrying them. This might be about how they are being treated. The first thing they should do is speak to any member of staff they trust (such as a Form Teacher, Teacher, a House Parent, the School Nurse, the Deputy Head or the Head); they can take a friend or person they trust with them if they wish – another pupil, an older child or another adult or a member of staff, their trusted person.

We have a 'worry monster' in Pre-prep and a 'worry and concern' box in the Prep School for our pupils to leave messages if the pupil would prefer to leave a note. The location and purpose of these are highlighted during the school year.

It is in everyone's best interest for concerns and complaints to be resolved as early as possible. Many issues can be dealt with informally, without the need for formal procedures. Informal concerns should be taken seriously, and every effort made to resolve them quickly and effectively.

Sometimes a friendly chat may not be enough and the child may wish to make a formal written complaint. This is what they should do:

The child should go and see any teacher or other trusted adult and tell him or her the problem. The adult they have chosen will listen to them sympathetically and help them talk things through. They will be helped to write down the details, which will then need to be given to the Head, unless the complaint is about the Head then they should speak to the Deputy Head or DSL.

The child will then be asked to talk the matter through with the Head (or Deputy Head) – that is, if they have not approached them in the first place – and they can have a friend with them, who may be another child or their trusted adult. If, within two more school days, they have not had the matter satisfactorily sorted out, they may contact any of the people whose details are listed below.

A PUPIL DOES NOT HAVE TO INFORM STAFF OR ANYONE ELSE THAT THEY ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THEM.

PEOPLE OUTSIDE SCHOOL THE CHILD MAY WISH TO CONTACT:

- **A parent or another relative or respected friend.**
- **The school's Independent Listener:** Mrs Lisa Donnelly Telephone - 01629 816830
Email- Listen@anselms.co.uk
- **Childline:** Telephone: 0800 1111; Freepost, London 1111, N1 0BR
- **Independent Schools Inspectorate:** Telephone 020 7600 0100
- **Dame Rachel de Souza, The Children's Commissioner** Telephone: 020 7783 8330
help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk or freephone 0800 528 0731.

These numbers are displayed on the boarding notice boards and around school.

Whoever the child contacts will speak to them at the school – again they can have a friend with them – and will advise the child about what course seems sensible. At that stage it will be up to the child to make a decision acting on his (her) advice.