



Dartford Science and Technology College

Complaints Procedure

This document sets out the College's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about the College or the education provided, please discuss the matter first with your child's Learning Manager at the earliest opportunity. The College takes any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved at this stage.

Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions, exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by College staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the College.

All other complaints are handled by the College according to the arrangements set out below.

Aims and Objectives

The College will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Our Procedure aims to:

- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to use and understand
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)
- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the College's Leadership & Management Team so that services can be improved.



Formal Complaints Procedure

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion, and you wish to have the matter formally investigated by an appropriate person from the College, please put your complaint in writing addressed to the Principal. The College will acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint within **three working days** of receiving it. The College will enclose a copy of the College's Complaints Procedure with the acknowledgement. Initially your complaint will be dealt with by the Principal. If you are not satisfied with the result from the Principal then the procedure will be as follows:

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of the College
- the interpretation of College policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at College

these are concerns/complaints under the Principals responsibility and will be investigated by the Chair of Governors.

A judgement about whether a meeting with the complainant could prove useful will be made on receipt of the complaint.

If the matter is about:

- College policies as determined by the Governing Body
- the actions or inactions of the Governing Body
- the Principal

these are concerns/complaints under the Governing Body's responsibility and will be investigated by the Chair of Governors or a governor nominated by the Chairman. It may be necessary to appoint an independent investigator in certain circumstances.

If the complaint is a staff disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case with your complaint.

SUMMARY

Interim Response

We will endeavour to resolve all complaints with a full written response within ten days. If this is not possible, an interim written reply will be sent to the complainant explaining the reason for the delay.

Final decision

Once the final decision has been reached, the decision may be conveyed verbally. However, a full written response will be sent to the complainant.

Route for Appeal

If you are still dissatisfied you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the Governing Body for consideration. All correspondence should be addressed to the Chair of Governors, care of the Clerk to the Governing Body via the College office.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Principal logs all formal complaints received by the College and record how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure and to improve working practice.

Availability

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request and is also available to download from the College website.