

FORMAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.

INTRODUCTION

Cardiff Academy prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its students. If parents or students do have a complaint, however, they can expect it to be taken very seriously by The Academy and to be treated in accordance with this procedure.

2.

PROCEDURE

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

If parents or students have a complaint, they should contact Dr. Wilson **immediately**. Very often, complaints and concerns are resolved quickly and informally by means of investigation and discussion. A written record of all concerns and complaints will be prepared. Immediate action to resolve the problem will be taken and strategies developed to prevent repetition. This may include involving other staff and co-ordinating a joint approach to the problem. Should the complaint not be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties within five working days, then the complainant will be advised to proceed in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then parents or students should put their complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

Step 1

In most cases, the Principal will meet the parents or student again, normally within three days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter further. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.

Step 2

It may be necessary for the Principal to carry out further investigations. If the complaint is against a member of staff, he/she will be made aware of the complaint against him/her and the matter will be dealt with in accordance with our Internal Disciplinary Procedure. The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.

Step 3

Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents or student will be informed of this decision in writing. The Principal will also give reasons for his decision.

In the event that action is being taken in accordance with our Internal Disciplinary Procedure, Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure will normally be suspended until the outcome of the Disciplinary process is known.

If the complaint is still not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, parents or students should proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

Following failure to reach an earlier solution, parents may seek to invoke Stage 3 of this Complaints Procedure. This involves referring the complaint to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and will be Chaired by the Company Secretary, Mr. Roger Howells. Mr. Howells will appoint The Panel, acknowledge the complaint in writing and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within five working days. If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars should be supplied to all parties not later than 24 hours prior to the hearing. The parents or student 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 it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it will normally complete within five working days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents or student informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents or student, the Principal and, where relevant, the person complained of.

Parents and students can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the School by paragraph 6(2)(j) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2003; where disclosure is required in the course of the School's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.