

Frome College - Complaints Guidance and Procedure 2019

We take all concerns seriously and aim to deal with them quickly so that there is not a need for formal procedures. The formal complaints procedures should only be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Initial concerns

In most cases classroom teachers and/or tutors should be the first port of call for concerns moving to Head of Year/Faculty for more serious issues or where the teacher/tutor has not been able to resolve the issue. In some cases concerns will be dealt with by members of the Senior Team; either an Assistant Principal or one of the Vice Principals.

Concerns about the College which are not from a parent/carer should be directed to the Principal.

Formal Complaints Procedure

A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing. Our complaints form can be found in Appendix A, which is attached.

There are four stages to our formal complaints procedure:

- Stage one – complaint heard by a member of staff (though not the subject of the complaint) – (informal).
- Stage two – complaint heard by the Principal – (formal)
- Stage three – complaint heard by the Chair of Governors – (formal)
- Stage four – complaint heard by the board of governors complaints appeal panel – (formal)

These stages are explained in a more detail in Appendix B, which is available on request from the principal's PA.

Complaints about the Principal will be dealt with initially by the chair of governors.

We use the term *Complainant* to describe any person making a complaint. An unsatisfied complainant can always take a complaint to the next stage.

Investigating Complaints

At each stage the person investigating the complaint will ensure that they:

- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- Meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- Consider interviewing those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- Conduct any interviews with an open mind;
- Keep notes of any interviews.

Resolving Complaints

At each stage in the procedure we will want to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved.

Complainants will be encouraged to state what actions they feel might resolve the problem.

We will try to identify areas of agreement. We will also try to clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred as this can create a positive atmosphere in which to discuss any outstanding issues.

Time Limits

The complainant must raise the complaint within 3 months of the incident. If the complaint is about a series of related incidents, they must raise the complaint within 3 months of the last incident.

We will consider exceptions to this time frame in circumstances where there were valid reasons for not making a complaint at that time and the complaint can still be investigated in a fair manner for all involved.

When complaints are made out of term time, we will consider them to have been received on the next school day.

If at any point we cannot meet the time scales we have set out in this policy, we will:

- Set new time limits with the complainant
- Send the complainant details of the new deadline and explain the delay

For further details, refer to Appendix B 'Complaints Procedure – The stages in detail'

Appendix A School Complaints Procedure Complaint Form

Your Name:	Student's name:
Your relationship to the student:	
Contact Details:	
Please give details of your complaint:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signature:	
Date:	
<u>College use</u>	
Date acknowledgement sent:	
By whom:	
Complaint referred to:	