



KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL

PANAMA

Parent Complaints Policy

Please also see Appendix 1 below - Inspired Parent Code of Conduct. This is included in the parent enrolment agreement and took effect in April 2023

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Introduction

King's College School Panama has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school in accordance with this Policy. Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Documentation and Record-keeping

A copy of this policy can be found on the school's website and is available to parents, pupils and staff. The school will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent required by paragraph 6(3)(f) of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (as subsequently amended), by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required by the ISI under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), or under other legal authority.

The school maintains a record of all parent complaints for at least three years for regular review by senior management and for inspection by inspectors. The record states whether the complaint was resolved at the preliminary stages or proceeded to a panel hearing. In the case of a complaint relating to a child in the EYFS the record will state the action taken as a result of the complaint.

The school will provide the inspectorate, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action taken as a result of each complaint.

The time limits specified in Part B of the Policy (below) shall be adapted by the school in relation to such a complaint in order to comply with this requirement.

THE POLICY

PART A - INFORMAL RESOLUTION

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly (within 14 days) and informally.

If a parent of any pupil has a complaint they ("the complainant") should contact one of the following in the first instance:

The pupil's form tutor/class teacher

The pupil's Head of School (ie the Head of EYFS, the Head of Primary or Secondary or Assistant Head).

The form tutor/class teacher/Head of School/Assistant Head (as applicable) will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. If the matter is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, they will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Part B of this policy.

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PART B – FORMAL RESOLUTION

Stage 1: A letter to the Headteacher

- (a) If the matter is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction by the informal process, the complainant may invoke the formal part of this Complaints Policy. They should do this by writing to the Headteacher giving details of their complaint and the outcome they are seeking.
- (b) The Headteacher will then either take the case forward himself or appoint a senior colleague who has had no prior involvement in the matter to do so.
- (c) The Headteacher or (where applicable) the senior colleague appointed by the Headteacher will offer to meet with the complainant to discuss the matter, normally within seven working days.
- (d) The complainant will be given an estimate of the time that is likely to be required to complete any necessary investigation.
- (e) Written notes will be kept of all material meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- (f) The complainant will be notified in writing of the decision reached at Stage 1.

Note: If the Headteacher handles the matter at Stage 1 (rather than appointing a senior colleague to do so) and the complainant is not satisfied with the Headteacher's decision in respect of their complaint, the complainant should then go straight to Stage 3 of this Policy.

Stage 2 – Appeal to the Headteacher

- (a) If the Headteacher appoints a senior colleague to investigate the complaint at Stage 1 and the complainant is not satisfied with that person's decision in respect of their complaint, the complainant should appeal to the Headteacher in writing within five working days after receiving the decision.
- (b) The Headteacher will offer to meet with the complainant to discuss the matter, normally within seven working days.
- (c) Once the Headteacher is satisfied that all the relevant facts have been established, he will inform the complainant of his decision in writing, normally within five working days of meeting with the complainant. The Headteacher will give reasons for his decision.

Stage 3 - Appeal to the Complaints Panel

- (a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the Headteacher's decision, they should send written notice of their complaint to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Inspired LATAM within five working days after receiving the Headteacher's decision. When doing so, the complainant should: (i) give reasonable particulars of their complaint; and (ii) specify the outcome they are seeking.
- (b) The matter will then be referred to a Complaints Panel for consideration. The CEO will schedule a hearing to take place as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within 15 working days of the receipt of the complaint.
- (c) Where a complaint that reaches Stage 3 is brought by one parent only, the school will (save in exceptional circumstances) keep informed and invite to attend the Panel hearing any other adult who entered into the contract with the College for the education of the relevant pupil. The school also reserves the right to keep informed and invite to attend the Panel hearing any other adult whom the College believes to have parental responsibility for the relevant pupil
- (d) The Panel will consist of at least three persons who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one member of the Panel shall be independent of the management and running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the CEO of LATAM, who shall also nominate one member of the Panel to chair the Panel.
- (e) In the case of a complaint regarding a pupil's suspension or exclusion, the Headteacher shall have complete discretion as to whether to implement the suspension or exclusion of the pupil pending the Panel's decision.
- (f) Within 3 working days after notifying their complaint to the CEO in accordance with paragraph (a) above, the complainant shall send the CEO copies of all documentation on which they intend to rely at the hearing.
- (g) The complainant shall produce (within five working days of the CEO's) any such further information and documentation that the CEO reasonably considers the Panel may require in order to make an informed decision about the complaint.
- (h) At least 3 working days before the hearing, the Headteacher shall submit to the Panel a written statement setting out his views in relation to the complaint. The CEO shall give a copy of the Headteacher's statement to the complainant.
- (i) The Panel may conduct or request that the CEO conducts such interviews before the hearing as the Panel sees fit.
- (j) The complainant shall (on request) be provided with a copy of their child's school file.
- (k) If the Chairman of the Panel shall so decide, the hearing may take place at a location outside the school

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- (l) The complainant may be accompanied at the hearing by one other person who is over the age of 18 and not a pupil at the school. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. It will not normally be appropriate for the complainant to be legally represented at the hearing and legal representation requires the prior approval of the Chairman of the Panel.
- (m) If possible, the Panel will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation. Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out.
- (n) If the Chairman of the Panel shall so decide, the hearing may be recorded by a recording device or transcribed by a stenographer.
- (o) Within five working days after the hearing, the CEO will send the complainant and the Headteacher a copy of the Panel's draft report. If the Panel's decision was reached by majority vote and there was a dissenting minority, the dissenting views shall be briefly summarised in the report.
- (p) If the complainant believes that the report is not factually accurate, the complainant shall inform the CEO in writing within five working days thereafter, giving details of the alleged inaccuracies. If the Headteacher believes that the report is not factually accurate, he shall likewise inform the Clerk in writing within five working days thereafter, giving details of the alleged inaccuracies.
- (q) The Panel shall then finalise its report. A copy of the Panel's report will be: (i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and (ii) available for inspection on school premises by the Governors and the Headteacher.
- (r) Subject to the rules set out in this document, the Panel may regulate their proceedings as they see fit.
- (s) For the purposes of this procedure "working day" means a day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday or a bank holiday in Panama

Appendix 1

Inspired Education Group Parent Code of Conduct

1. Commitment to working with parents.

We are proud at Inspired schools to have excellent relationships, based on shared beliefs and common goals, between students, staff and parents – this partnership is key to the success of our schools and ensuring students can continue to flourish in a positive and supportive environment.

We encourage and welcome parents' full participation in the life of our schools, as part of a mutually supportive community that embodies the ethos and values of the school, in the best interests of the students; we are committed to listening to parental feedback to support our schools in being the very best they can be - this code of conduct clarifies our expectations of this relationship.

The school's philosophy and values should be considered as being shared by all members of the community, including parents, and hence parents are expected to uphold these values in all of their interactions with the school and its community.

Every member of our community deserves to be treated with respect, dignity, and tolerance; they are also cornerstones of the Inspired philosophy. We demand it of all our students and expect all adults, including parents, to abide by these standards and set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.

2. Communicating with school.

We understand that there will be occasions when parents and guardians wish to raise concerns or complaints – we ask parents to share these with school leadership through the appropriate channels and/or following the school's complaints policy, so these can be quickly resolved for the best interests of our students.

We expect behaviour and communications between parents and school to be always respectful and mindful of the modelling of best behaviours we expect of our students, whether at school events, in person, on the telephone or online.

In the event of disagreements between school staff and parents, these should not be worked through in sight of the parent's children or, indeed, any other students in the school. We believe that when home and school can present a shared opinion or decision to children/students, this is ultimately beneficial as part of the student's learning and development process.

We expect parents to follow and uphold all procedures outlined in the school's published policies.

3. Behaviour and communication that is unacceptable.

We will always do all we can to facilitate communication with parents that is consistent with the above principles in resolving the concern or the complaint, but we will not tolerate communication or behaviour we consider disrespectful, abusive or threatening.

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Behaviours that we consider to be unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

- Communication or behaviour that is disrespectful, offensive, aggressive, abusive, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying or otherwise considered unacceptable, whether this is at school events, in person, on the telephone, by email or on social media.
- Behaviour or communications that breach school policies, safety or procedures.
- Disruptive behaviour including offensive language or displays of anger which interferes or threatens to interfere with the normal, daily operation of the school.
- Inappropriate posting of libellous, defamatory, malicious or threatening messages on emails and on traditional and social media about the school or individuals connected with it, including creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass an individual connected with the school or the school in general, or potentially damage the school's reputation.

4. Consequences of breaching parent code of conduct.

Where behaviours are displayed by parents that breach the parent code of conduct, the school will attempt to facilitate more effective lines of communication, investigate, and seek to resolve these issues.

Where that is not possible, the school reserves the right to take any actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subject to abuse. Actions the school can take are, but not limited to include:

- request for a meeting to resolve the issue.
- issue a warning regarding the behaviour and how that breaches this code.
- withdraw the right to be on school premises or at school events.
- give notice to parents to that the enrolment contract with their child/ren has been rescinded and an alternative school will need to be found

Created and Reviewed by :	Policy Category: school
Dawn Akyurek September 2017	
Dawn Akyurek August 2019	
Nigel Fossey September 2021 Nigel Fossey December 2022 Nigel Fossey added Inspired Parent Code of Conduct April 2023	
Approved by Matt Harbison CEO December 2021	Next Review: September 2023
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