



to raise on their own behalf and which are best raised by them.

Complaints from members of the public will be treated in a similar way to complaints from parents, although most complaints from the public would be referred directly to the Principal or a member of the Executive.

Complaints treated as constructive suggestions can facilitate rectification and improvement and may prevent cause for further complaint. Even an unjustified complaint may indicate an area that can be improved.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COMPLAINT AND A CONCERN UNDER THIS POLICY?

A **concern** is the expression of a worry, something that has made a person troubled or anxious about an issue and is expressed at a 'first level' i.e. to a class teacher at the classroom door in the Junior School or by telephone or email directly to the relevant staff member. Depending on the nature of the concern, it can often be resolved at this 'first level' in a more informal manner.

A **complaint** is " *an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about an organisation, related to its production of goods or services, or another member of the School community.*

All complaints need to be handled seriously.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS

St Mary's aims to ensure that:

students, parents and the

community wishing to make a complaint know how to do so;

the School is open to the concerns of parents and students;

complaints are received in a positive manner;

parents and students can expect to be taken seriously and can approach any member of staff about their concerns;

concerns are dealt with as speedily as possible and those who have raised them are kept informed about progress;





“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chair of the School Board of Governors may also need to be informed. It is the school's policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their child(ren).

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child's safety was at risk or it became necessary to refer matters to the police or other external authority. If information is passed to a third party, you will be informed, unless this is prevented by legal obligation.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints might not be pursued.



PARENTS STEPS IN MAKING A COMPLAINT





INFORMATION FOR JUNIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

Any Problems, Complaints, or Suggestions?

If so, the School would like to hear.

What can



SENIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS STEPS IN MAKING A COMPLAINT

Usually, Senior School students speak with a member of staff if they have a concern or a complaint. If it is not resolved by the member of staff, the student's parent may become involved in the following steps. If it is a serious issue, the School will contact the parent. The student may commence the process at any one of the steps.

