



Parental Concerns

1. Objectives

- 1.1 Given the inter-personal nature of education, from time to time concerns will be expressed by parents about the progress of their child or about an aspect of the school programme as it affects their child. The intention of this policy is to establish procedures which will be followed to:
 - achieve positive outcomes;
 - serve the best interests of the child;
 - ensure fairness, accuracy and balanced input between home and school;
 - promote good home-school communications and relationships by ensuring that the parties involved in the process remain suitably informed;
 - give priority to achieving solutions as soon as practically possible;
 - ensure that follow-up procedures review the effectiveness of actions taken to remedy the problem.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Formal Complaint Policy.

2 Policy

- 2.1 Parents with a concern about their child will be encouraged by the school to take the matter up directly with the appropriate staff member at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.2 1st Stage of Referral: Teacher
 1. When the concern relates to a particular child or classroom, the initial contact must be with the teacher concerned.
 2. Where possible, Head's of Department (i.e. Head of Pre-School; Deans of Junior Girls' Prep, and Boys' Prep Schools) and the Principal will redirect to the appropriate staff member any concerns that have yet to be addressed directly by the teacher concerned.
 3. Teachers will keep the Head of Department informed of all concerns or complaints expressed by parents, and of the agreed actions to resolve them. If a teacher handling a parental concern is not the pupil's class teacher, the class teacher will also be kept informed of the matter by the teacher concerned or Head of Department.
- 2.3 2nd Stage of Referral: Head of Department
 - 2.3.1 The Head of Department will address a concern where:
 1. The problem has not been satisfactorily resolved between the parent and teacher within a reasonable time frame, or
 2. The response of the teacher is deemed by a parent to be inadequate to resolve the concern, or
 3. The teacher believes that the concern is not able to be resolved by him/her, or
 4. The parent believes that a direct approach to the teacher may aggravate the issue.

- 2.3.2 The Head of Department will inform the Deputy Principal (Student Welfare) in every instance where a parental concern has been drawn to their attention.
- 2.3.3 The Head of Department will meet with the teacher and parent(s) to review the concern and any action taken. The Head of Department will attempt to reach agreement on further resolution processes.
- 2.4 3rd Stage of Referral: Principal
- a. If the concern has been addressed by the teacher concerned and the Head of Department, but is still not satisfactorily resolved, the matter may be referred to the Principal.
 - b. The Principal will meet with the teacher, Head of Department and parent(s) to review the concern and any action taken. The Principal will attempt to reach agreement on further resolution processes.
 - c. If such a complaint is made in written form and involves a serious breach of professional standards or serious misconduct, or it involves the Principal, it may invoke the procedures contained in the Formal Complaint Policy.

3. Procedure

- 3.1 At whichever stage of referral that a concern is addressed under this policy, the following process will be followed.
- 3.1.1 A written record is to be kept of the content of all meetings and actions taken.
 - 3.1.2 There will be open discussion between all the parties concerned at a venue and at a time that is appropriate to the matter of concern and to those involved.
 - 3.1.3 The discussions will endeavour to:
 - a. reach agreement on the nature of the problem;
 - b. identify actions required to address the problem; and
 - c. identify those responsible for taking the agreed action.and, if the following is appropriate, the parties will:
 - d. set a time frame for the action;
 - e. set a date for a meeting at which all concerned will jointly review the effectiveness of the action(s) taken, and to decide upon any necessary follow-on actions.
 - 3.1.4 The problem-solving actions agreed to will be put in place by those identified to do so as above.
 - 3.1.5 All appropriate persons concerned will meet on the agreed date to review the effectiveness of the action.
 - 3.1.6 At the conclusion this process, a written record of the concern will be compiled. The record will, in summary form, describe the nature of the problem, the actions taken and the review of outcomes. The record will be distributed to the parties concerned and a copy attached to the pupil's personal file.