



Cranbury College



**TWO STAGE
CORPORATE COMPLAINTS
PROCEDURE**

FINAL DRAFT

(Valid from 02/01/2013)

Adopted by Cranbury College

January 2016

1. 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The formal process divides into 2 stages. The first of these provides an opportunity for a local resolution of any problems which may arise and it is expected that the majority of complaints will be sorted out at this level. Where the problems cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at a local level, stage 2 of the process involves the investigation of the complaint by a more senior member of staff.
- 1.2 However, to the public, the notification of quite simple matters eg, query regarding a lesson or lesson times, could be considered as a complaint. These should be treated as comments or observations - the complaints' procedure will not be activated until the defect observed has not been rectified within the "standard time". This is a preliminary process to the complaints' procedure. However, all such calls or comments should be recorded.
- 1.3 The standard definition of a complaint is:

"Any expression of dissatisfaction that needs a response".

2 Complaints' Procedure

2.1 Stage 1 - Cranbury College Informal Resolution of Complaints

- 2.1.1 Where a complaint is received by a member of staff it must be recorded, even if it can be resolved informally. The record should show the substance of the complaint, what action was taken to resolve it and whether or not the service user is satisfied with the outcome. Where possible, and practical, the person should be asked to sign the record to confirm it is correct. In order that complaints can be tracked a copy should be sent to the Head Teacher of Cranbury College as soon as possible after the complaint has been made, whether or not it has been resolved. The original should be appropriately filed by either the Line Manager or Office Manager.

- 2.1.2 If the complaint is not resolved at the time at which it is made, then, except for minor issues, the Head teacher should be informed. Every effort should be made to respond to the complaint within **5 school working days**. In any event, a letter of acknowledgement or other response (orally or by phone and recorded in the contact book, text or email) shall be sent out to the complainant within **5 working days**.
- 2.1.3 The Head teacher should review the complaints file regularly, and take the lead in advising staff in relation to handling of complaints. The Head teacher should always ensure that members of staff are made aware of complaints made about them or their actions
- 2.1.4 Every effort should be made to resolve the complaint or representation as speedily as possible and to the complainant's satisfaction, within **20 school working days**. The response to the complainant should be recorded, however briefly, and the Management Committee should also be informed to allow monitoring of the complaints' process.
- 2.1.5 The response to the complainant should advise them that, should they remain dissatisfied, they can
- a ask for their complaint to be investigated by Cranbury College Management Committee, or
 - b refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, who will investigate alleged maladministration by a local authority.

A time limit (14 days would be reasonable) should be suggested for them to request an investigation by the Management Committee, after which it will be assumed that they are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, or have referred the matter to the Ombudsman.

- 2.1.6 Complaints revolving around Cranbury College policy will effectively be completed at Stage 1. Although recorded as complaints, there is no scope for investigating matters of policy. However, complainants can be advised to raise the issue with Cranbury College Management Committee.

2.2 Stage 2 - Formal Investigation

- 2.2.1 When it has not proved possible to resolve the complaint, and the complainant remains dissatisfied, the complainant can ask for their complaint to be investigated by Cranbury College Management Committee. This is Stage 2 of the complaints' procedure.
- 2.2.2 All complaints which proceed to Stage 2 must be immediately notified to the Head teacher, Management Committee and to the Directorate of Children Education and Early Help Services. An acknowledgement must be sent to the complainant within **5 school working days**.
- 2.2.3 The Management Committee will appoint a manager to carry out an investigation.
- 2.2.4 The Investigating Officer will meet with the complainant and agree their complaint, which should be recorded in writing. Following the investigation they will submit a report to the Head of Service. The Head of Service will ensure that a written response is made to a Stage 2 complaint, **within 30 school working days** of its receipt, enclosing a copy of the Investigating Officer's report.
- 2.2.5 The Management Committee/Head teacher is responsible for ensuring the quality of the report and response to the complainant. Copies of the Investigating Officer's report and the written response to the complainant must be sent to the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services.
- 2.2.6 Should a complainant remain dissatisfied with the decision or actions of Cranbury College, the final course of action which they may take is to contact the Local Government Ombudsman