

# PLATANOS COLLEGE

## **Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at, Platanos College. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.



## **CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**2017 – 2018**

# Concerns and Complaints Policy

## A. Principles

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This is the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up with safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances.

We recognise that a difficulty which is not resolved quickly and fairly can become a cause of resentment, which would be damaging to relationships. Parents/carers and pupils should never feel - or be made to feel - that a complaint will adversely affect his/her opportunities at the school. We will resolve every parent/carer's concern or complaint in the appropriate way and, where necessary, review our systems and procedures.

It is the aim of the school to ensure that a concern or complaint is managed sympathetically, efficiently and resolved as soon as possible in order to promote fairness and pupils' welfare.

## B. Management of complaints

A senior member of staff is appointed Complaints Co-ordinator by the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher to handle complaints from parents/carers (the complainant). If the Complaints Co-ordinator is unavailable or is the subject of the complaint, another senior member of staff or the Headteacher will be responsible. If the Headteacher is the subject of the complaint, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Academy Trust.

## C. Procedures

### Stage 1: Concerns reported informally

- 1.1 We expect that most concerns can be resolved informally. Examples might include dissatisfaction about the allocation of responsibilities or about a timetable clash.
- 1.2 Please raise the concern initially with the subject teacher / class tutor / head of year. Discussion with other more senior staff will take place as appropriate. They will aim to resolve the issue quickly and informally (for example through a meeting or a telephone conversation with the complainant).
- 1.3 All concerns will be acknowledged and a written record will be kept with the Complaints Co-ordinator.
- 1.4 Concerns which have not been resolved by informal means within **15 school days** should be notified in writing as a formal complaint which will be dealt with in accordance with Stage 2.

## **Stage 2: Formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher**

- 2.1 An unresolved concern from Stage 1 should be set out in writing addressed to the Headteacher.
- 2.2 Complaints will be acknowledged by telephone, fax, e-mail, or letter.
- 2.3 A senior member of staff may be appointed to investigate the matter and one or more members of the Academy Trust may be involved. Additional information may be required from you. Written records of the investigation will be kept.
- 2.4 You will be notified of the outcome of the investigation in writing within **20 school days** from the receipt of the complaint. Please note that any complaint received within one month from the end of term or half term is likely to take longer to resolve due to school holidays and limited personnel.

## **Stage 3: Referral to the Chair of the Academy Trust**

- 3.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the Headteacher's decision under Stage 2, the complaint may be renewed formally in writing to the Chair of the Academy Trust of the school.
- 3.2 Please write to the Chair within **five (5) working days** of receiving the Headteacher's decision. Please give full details of the complaint including all relevant documents that you wish to be considered.
- 3.3 The Chair will arrange for the complaint to be investigated following procedures equivalent to Stage 2. When the Chair is satisfied that all the facts are established, he/she will notify the complainant in writing of their decision and the reasons behind it within **20 school days** from receipt of the complaint.

## **Stage 4: Referral to the Academy Trust Complaints Panel**

- 4.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the Chair's decision the complainant may ask for the complaint to be referred to the Academy Trust Complaints Panel by writing to the Clerk to the Academy Trust at the school's address within **five (5) working days**.
- 4.2 A Panel Hearing will be held and will review the decisions taken by the Headteacher and the Chair of the Academy Trust. The Panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Academy Trust and will consist of at least three (3) people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. At least one panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school.
- 4.3 The parent (complainant) may attend the hearing and be accompanied at the hearing if they wish. The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date.
- 4.4 Please ensure that all relevant documents and all the grounds of your complaint are detailed in writing to the Clerk of the Academy Trust if you would like a Panel Hearing. Please also provide all other documents which you would like the Panel to consider. Documentation not submitted to the Panel in advance cannot be considered. All requests will be acknowledged.

- 4.5 The Panel will establish the facts by assessing the documents provided by both parties and any representations made by the complainant, the Headteacher or the Chair at the Panel Hearing.
- 4.6 The Panel will decide whether the complaint is upheld or dismissed after the hearing. The findings and recommendations of the Panel will be provided in writing to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about within **10 school days** of the Panel Hearing taking place. The decision of the Panel would be final.
- 4.7 The Panel will make available a copy of the findings and recommendations for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor (Academy Trust) and the Headteacher.

## **D. Records**

A written record will be kept of the following:

- i) all formal complaints that are made whether they are resolved following a formal procedure or proceed to a Panel Hearing;
- ii) all action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.