

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

Reviewed SEPTEMBER 2024

At Studio One (Dorset's Centre for Performing Arts) Ltd & the Dorset Foundation College for Performing Arts we pride ourselves on our openness and approachability as an educational organisation. We welcome the expression of opinions, ideas and suggestions, and, in particular, recognise the right of parents, Students, and Staff to air a grievance, express a concern or make a formal complaint. Concerns and complaints are always taken seriously, and it is our aim to resolve them in the most satisfactory manner possible.

In the event of a Parent, Student or Member of Staff wishes to express a concern or make a complaint, we encourage the complainant to bring the matter to our attention as early as possible. This gives us the opportunity to try and rectify a problem or to explain our position before a matter escalates. If you are in any doubt as to whether to raise a concern, we encourage you to contact us for further advice.

### **Policy aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that a concern or complaint is managed sensitively, efficiently and at the appropriate level so that it may be resolved as soon as possible. Parents, carers and Students should never feel that a complaint will be taken lightly or that a complaint could adversely affect their opportunities at this school/College.

However, the policy distinguishes between a difficulty that can be resolved informally and a formal complaint that requires investigation.

**The stages of the Complaints Procedure:** this policy describes a three-stage procedure

Stage 1: To draw attention to a concern or difficulty either made orally or in writing to a Staff Member.

Stage 2: **A Formal Complaint Form** (please request from our main Reception) should be completed and posted to The Principal or The Directors.

Stage 3: **A Meeting** will be set up with our Principal or Directors (which ever is appropriate to the complaint) to discuss the grievance in depth if necessary.

**Confidentiality** A written record will be kept of all complaints made in writing under the formal part of the Complaints Procedure; to include whether the complaint has been resolved, whether it has proceeded to meeting, and a record of any action taken by Studio One (DCPA) Ltd / The Dorset Foundation College because of the complaint.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be considered confidential.

### **STAGE 1: INFORMALLY RAISING A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT ORALLY OR IN WRITING**

Our aim is to ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. We expect that most concerns, where a parent or Student seeks intervention, reconsideration or some other action to be taken, can be resolved informally.

Examples might include dissatisfaction about some aspect of teaching, a billing error or a matter regarding school equipment.

Who should you send your informal complaint to?

If a parent has a concern or an informal complaint, they should normally contact the Class Teacher by email or letter. Please do not approach the Teacher with your complaint. The Teacher will respond to your correspondence within five days.

In many cases, the matter will be resolved quickly by this means to the Parent's satisfaction.

We will aim to resolve the issues immediately without the need for further investigation, however If the Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult other Staff Members.

**Acknowledgement:** The complainant will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of their complaint, an indication of who will deal with it and the time it is expected to take – We will endeavour to resolve the issue swiftly at this stage.

### **STAGE 2: COMPLETING A FORMAL COMPLAINT**

Your complaint will be acknowledged via telephone or in writing within five working days with the communication indicating the action that is being taken and confirming that a response will be provided within five working days. Actions will be taken to attempt to resolve the complaint. We endeavour to come to an agreement at this stage if an agreement wasn't reached at Stage 1.

### **STAGE 3: MEETING WITH THE DIRECTORS OR THE PRINCIPAL**

Following a failure to reach an earlier resolution the complaint will be referred to the Principal or to our Directors (which ever is appropriate to the complaint) who will acknowledge the complainant & where possible will intervene to resolve the difficulty.

**The Principal's decision will be final.**