

Dainfern College Complaints Policy & Procedures

(Updated 4 July 2018)

Introduction

The ethos of Dainfern College is pupil-centred. Our Code of Conduct is built upon our Core Values, and we strive for excellence in all that we do. “Best practice in teaching and learning” is our goal, and our vision is to provide “A world of education ... an education for the world”.

Nevertheless, there are occasions where we may fall down, by doing something wrong, failing to do something we should have done, or by acting unfairly. There are also times when parents hear complaints from their children that are exaggerated, untrue or coloured by the child’s emotional state.

A positive parent-pupil-school relationship is the best predictor of a child’s success at school. It is therefore important to keep the channels of communication open, so that concerns or complaints can be dealt with promptly within the systems of the College.

Dainfern College is an OPEN ORGANISATION. This means that there is a transparency in the way the College is managed, and that the systems and procedures in place are there for the benefit of the pupils and the efficient management of the College.

We welcome parents voicing their concerns in a respectful and polite manner, and undertake to investigate such complaints promptly. However, we cannot tolerate parental interference with the core management of the school. There needs to be some recognition from parents that the College operates in the best interests of all of its stakeholders, and that at times the needs of the individual **will** conflict with the needs of the College.

Approach

The teachers at Dainfern College are professional people and all have a duty of Pastoral Care to their pupils. They know their pupils and most often have an awareness of the context in which a problem may have arisen.

Parents are therefore asked to approach their children’s teachers or coaches (if the problem occurred in the extracurricular sphere) **first**. Should the problem NOT be satisfactorily resolved at this level, the Head of Grade or Head of Department or Deputy Principal for that section of the school can then be approached.

In certain instances, where the issues are personal, strategic or pertinent to the College as a whole, it is appropriate that the complaints/concerns go to a member of the College Executive Committee.

Complaints can be verbal or in writing. However, if a parent wishes to raise a complaint verbally, we require them to make an appointment to see the relevant person. Rudeness or abuse from parents raising complaints will not be tolerated. In such an instance the interview will be terminated immediately. It can be rescheduled for a later time should the parent undertake to ensure that the reason for the meeting is to resolve the issue.

Confidentiality

Where possible, and if required, confidentiality will be maintained. The culture of Dainfern College, as well as the professional standing of our teachers, does not tolerate negative returns upon either the child of the person complaining or on the complainant. Our aim is to identify the issues and address them, and the person raising the complaint can be assured that they will not suffer any negative comeback as a result of their initiative in this regard.

Resolution

Every effort will be made to resolve an issue in the best interests of the child and/or the best interests of the College. Not all issues are resolvable to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, and in such instances a compromise will be sought and agreed upon.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints within an open culture are inappropriate and will be disregarded. Such complaints are impossible to resolve satisfactorily.

Intractable or unresolvable complaints

In a situation where the College has done all in its power to resolve complaints satisfactorily, or where a parent becomes a persistent and aggressive complainer, there may be no option but for the Principal to ask the parent to find another school for their child. Should a parent/child be so unhappy or dissatisfied with the offer at Dainfern College, it is clearly not in the interests of the pupil or the College for him/her to remain there. In such a situation, the Principal will undertake to help the parents find a more suitable school for their child. However, notice periods would still be applicable.