



**ST STITHIANS COLLEGE
CODE OF CONDUCT: PARENT**

Introduction

1. In order for the integrity of the school to be maintained it is imperative that the values and behaviours outlined in The Saints Charter are adhered to by all.
2. It is expected that the school and parents work together in a positive partnership in the education of the learner. However, there may be occasion when this relationship breaks down. In such situations a parent may have a grievance against an employee or office-bearer of the College. A Parent Grievance procedure has been designed for this purpose and is available on the College website.
3. Likewise, the school may have a grievance against a parent. The procedures in this policy are designed to deal with such circumstances.
4. There are two sets of circumstances which may deem it necessary for the school to follow the procedure set out below:
 - 4.1. The first is when the parent continually fails to behave according to the values and behaviours as described in The Saints Charter.
 - 4.2. The second deals with incidents of misconduct covered by common and/or criminal law.

Process: failure to behave according to the standards expected in The Saints Charter

5. **Step 1: Meeting with the parent** - A meeting with the parent to discuss the issue/incident will be held. If the parent agrees to meet, the following procedures are implemented:
 - 5.1. Define the problem rationally, while acknowledging the emotional dimension. (It is important that the parent feels heard).
 - 5.2. The parent will be invited to suggest possible solutions to the problem.
 - 5.3. The College will remain solution-centred, building for a maximum win-win situation (parent and College against "the problem" rather than College versus parent).
 - 5.4. The agreed upon solution will be reduced to writing within 7 days of the meeting (unless circumstances dictate otherwise) to the parent summarising the key aspects of the interview.
 - 5.5. Request that the parent acknowledge receipt of the letter within seven days of receiving it.
6. **Step 2: Calling to Account** - A Written Warning. Should the parent refuse to attend a meeting as requested above, or the negative behaviour continues, the Head will send a formal letter, via registered post, to the parent that includes the following:
 - 6.1. A description of the behaviour causing concern.
 - 6.2. If applicable, a summary of previous conversations/meetings and the school's attempts to resolve the issues causing the behaviour.
 - 6.3. The reasons why the continued negative behaviour is unacceptable from the school's point of view. Reference will be made to the school's Motto, Honour Code, Statement of Strategic Intent and/or The Saints Charter.
 - 6.4. The parent will be invited to an appointment with the head in order to resolve the matter.
 - 6.5. The parent will be requested to acknowledge receipt of the letter within seven days. Failure to acknowledge receipt will however, not limit the College's right to take action as contemplated in this policy or any other policy that may have a bearing on the matter.
 - 6.6. A warning that further action against the parent may be taken should the negative behaviour not cease immediately.
7. Further action may be in the form of a formal hearing.

Process: incidents of misconduct covered by common and/or criminal law.

8. When an allegation of misconduct covered by common and/or criminal law is made against a parent, the College may proceed directly to a formal hearing, to adjudicate the allegation made.
9. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, allegations of: drunken and disorderly behaviour, possession and use of illegal substances, theft, fraud, assault, including sexual assault or harassment, immoral behaviour, any form of intimidation, racism, sexism, possession of, and/or using any weapons, vandalism or destruction of other peoples' property.
10. The college reserves its right to seek remedy under law.

The Formal Hearing

11. A Formal Hearing will be conducted in the following manner:
 - 11.1. The parent will be given reasonable written notice (at least seven calendar days) of the date, time and venue of the Hearing.
 - 11.2. S/he will be informed of the allegations/circumstance that have given rise to the hearing, including details of the alleged unacceptable behaviours.
 - 11.3. S/he will be made aware that the outcome of the hearing may result in further action being taken against him/her.
12. S/he must also be notified of his/her rights during the hearing:
 - 12.1. To be fully informed of the charges against him/her.
 - 12.2. To have a friend or relative accompany him/her to the hearing.
 - 12.3. As this is an internal matter, legal representation may only be allowed at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Hearing.
 - 12.4. To call witnesses or question witnesses from the school.
 - 12.5. To present evidence in mitigation.

Communication of Outcome and Follow-up

13. Once the hearing has been completed, the Chairperson must carefully consider all the evidence heard and come to a decision as to what measures are to be taken against the parent (if any).
14. Once this decision has been reached, this needs to be properly communicated to the parent. The parent's right to appeal (to the Rector) must also be communicated to the Parent.
15. To appeal, should s/he feel that the hearing or its outcome has been unfair, the parent should direct their appeal in writing via the Chairperson to the Rector within 5 days of the hearing. The Rector will appoint an appropriate person to review the appeal and to make a finding regarding the appeal submitted. The reviewer's finding should be communicated to the appellant/parent within 10 days of the appeal being received.
16. Should the parent accept the findings of the hearing, and wish to reach reconciliation, this should be allowed within certain pre-agreed parameters.
17. Should the parent not be prepared to abide by the findings of the hearing, the following further action is recommended.

Possible further measures aimed at the resolution of intractable grievances or differences

18. The Head may need to seek legal advice. (This would need to have been communicated to the Rector).
19. Subject to the outcome of any appeal process and prior to seeking legal advice, the Head may wish to invoke one or both of the following actions:
 - 19.1. Revoking the right of admission to the school to prevent the parent harassing the staff, learners or other parents.
 - 19.2. Cancelling the educational contract.