



# **Complaints Policy**

## **Third Party**

## Mission Statement

***‘To educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ’s Gospel’***

### Introduction

This policy applies to complaints raised by individuals who are not current parents or students of Thornton College. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Former parents or students
- Members of the local community
- Visitors to the school
- Contractors or suppliers
- Other external stakeholders

Complaints from current parents or students are covered by the School’s main Complaints Policy.

### What constitutes a complaint

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the School’s operations, conduct, or decisions that affect or involve third parties. Complaints may relate to:

- Conduct of staff or students
- Use of school facilities
- Environmental concerns (e.g. noise, traffic)
- Interactions with the school during events or visits

### General principles

- Complaints will be handled seriously, respectfully, and in a timely manner.  
The School will maintain confidentiality and comply with data protection regulations.  
Complaints must be made in good faith and not be vexatious or malicious.

The School reserves the right to decline to investigate complaints that fall outside the scope of this policy or have already been addressed.

### Complaints Procedure

#### Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Third parties are encouraged to raise concerns informally in the first instance by contacting the School Office via email at [admin@thorntoncollege.com](mailto:admin@thorntoncollege.com) or by telephone.

The concern will be directed to the appropriate member of staff (e.g. Bursar, Estates Manager, or Deputy Head), who will aim to resolve the issue, normally within 10 working days during term time. Outside of term time, it may take longer to resolve issues.

## **Stage 2 – Formal Complaint**

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may submit a formal written complaint to the Head Teacher via their PA at [TRobinson@thorntoncollege.com](mailto:TRobinson@thorntoncollege.com) , clearly stating:

- The nature of the complaint
- Relevant dates, locations, and individuals involved
- The resolution sought

The Head Teacher (or nominee) will acknowledge the complaint normally within 5 working days during term time and aim to provide a written response normally within 20 working days, following any necessary investigation. Whilst every effort will be made to respond to complaints in a timely manner outside of term time, this may take longer.

## **Stage 3 – Panel Review (if applicable)**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request a review by a Complaints Panel, consisting of at least two senior staff members and one Governor and/or Trustee not involved in the matter.

This stage is discretionary and may not be offered for all third-party complaints. The decision to convene a panel will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

## **Record Keeping and Confidentiality**

All formal complaints and outcomes will be recorded and retained in accordance with the School's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

## **Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to:

- Requests for information under Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests
- Matters subject to legal proceedings
- Safeguarding concerns (which must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

## **Contact**

For third-party complaints, please contact:

School Office

Thornton College

Email: [admin@thorntoncollege.com](mailto:admin@thorntoncollege.com)