

## **Horndean Technology College – Working with our Stakeholders**

We believe that working effectively in partnership with parents/carers is essential to ensuring the highest standards of welfare and success of our students. We would therefore like to thank parents/carers for their support and efforts in working closely with us to achieve this aim.

The College communicates via telephone, Firefly The Virtual Learning Platform, Class Charts, the College website, individual and collective parent letters and when necessary individual texts.

We expect our staff to respond in a timely, courteous and professional manner to parent queries or concerns. In return parents are requested to uphold these standards whether communication is by telephone, Firefly VLE, Class Charts, e-mail or in person. Most issues should be resolved by the member of staff most closely associated with the concern raised. We aim to deal with all complaints seriously and work to resolve them. There should therefore be no need to approach the Headteacher, Governors, LA or Ofsted as a means to fast-forward your complaint. In exceptional circumstances, reference to our General Complaints Procedure is recommended.

Resolution of issues is always of high priority and in order to do so effectively communication should be calm, respectful and appreciative of there being more sides to an issue than parents or staff might initially be aware of. It is the case that when issues are complex we do require the time to investigate and listen thoroughly to understand what has happened in order to make informed decisions and conclusions. Thank you again for maintaining positive relationships and enabling us to focus our attentions on educating your child to ensure that they make positive progress.

### **Concerns: Code of Conduct**

Complaints or concerns should be addressed to the person who was most heavily involved in the incident, unless it is of a very personal nature to do with that staff member, in which case it should be addressed to their line manager. In line with the Complaints Policy, the Headteacher should not be involved immediately and should only become involved when the correct procedure has been followed in order to allow a suitably neutral review of your concern if necessary.

We ask that parents do not respond to any text message or phone call that your child might send during the day about events that happen. This can cause parents to overreact which is often unhelpful as they are unaware of context or action already taken. Students know that they should contact Student Services if they want to make contact with parents.

Inflammatory comments or statement should be avoided and the tone should be courteous at all times – emotive and accusatory words such as 'disgusting', use of capitals or defamatory statements should not be included. The complaint should reflect the information you have currently received; the assumption should be that you have one version of the matter which is a concern, rather than concluding you have the totality of the information.

Each complainant will represent their own views and should not seek to present themselves as self-appointed spokesperson for others.

We aim to deal with complaints seriously and work to resolve them, there is no need to threaten with the Governors, LA or Ofsted as a means to fast-forward your complaint.

Meetings will be arranged where and when it is deemed necessary. We expect all parties involved in such meetings to be calm, courteous and respectful of other people's views. At no time during a meeting should any party be made to feel uncomfortable because of threatening or intimidating behaviour. People who behave in this way may not be invited to future meetings or banned from HTC site. Concerns around safety or child protection will be dealt with immediately otherwise appointments will need to be made in advance to be seen by a staff member.

## **Social Media**

We do not expect parents to make complaints, accusations or bring the College's reputation into disrepute on any social media website. Whilst the College uses various channels of communication as outlined above parents/carers also set up independent channels such as a Year Group Facebook or What's App page to share information.

We would expect parents/carers to be respectful about staff, and the College at all times on such websites. We would equally expect the authors to be respectful of other parents/carers and their children. We would not expect parents/carers to use these forums to make complaints or express concerns about the College.

Any complaints should be as above directed to the person concerned and where necessary follow the College Complaint Procedure. Using such sites to complain is not constructive and the College cannot improve or address issues if they are not raised in an appropriate way.

Parents/Carers should not use private groups or personal social media to complain about, or try to resolve, a behaviour issue involving other students. Parents should contact the College and speak to the appropriate member of staff relating to the specific behaviour issue or incident.

Parents/Carers under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) should not upload or share photos or videos on social media of any child other than their own unless they have the direct permission of the other child's parents/carers.

Any concerns and complaints which are received which do not comply with our expectations will be returned unattended until the communications meet the expectations outlined above. Parents/Carers who breach the terms will be subject to restricted access to staff.

These standards apply to written and verbal complaints.