

# DE LA SALLE COLLEGE



## GRIEVANCE POLICY

*“IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH GOD, WHO NEVER LIES, PROMISED BEFORE THE AGES BEGAN.”*

**TITUS 1:2**

Compiled by: The College Director	Last Reviewed: June 2025
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# De La Salle College complies with the Jersey Advisory and Conciliation Service guidance notes.

## Statement of Policy

De La Salle College (DLS) recognises that employees may, from time to time, have concerns or complaints about their work, working relationships or working environment. In this event employees can raise a grievance under this policy, unless the matter is subject to other agreed procedures.

This policy sets out informal and formal processes to follow when an employee has a grievance. DLS aims to deal with grievances promptly, fairly, consistently, and without unreasonable delay. It will carry out necessary investigations, meet with the employee to discuss their grievance, and inform them of the outcome. An employee has the right to appeal any formal decision if they are not satisfied.

DLS encourages individuals and managers to make every effort to resolve problems informally in the first instance, as this is often the most effective method of addressing grievances. However, if the issue is serious, or has not been resolved in this way, a formal grievance may be raised.

This policy is not contractual and may be amended from time to time, in light of changes in legislation or operational requirements.

## Content and Scope

Grievances may involve a wide range of issues, for example, work relationships, bullying, harassment, discrimination, terms and conditions of employment, new working practices, health and safety and the working environment.

For grievances relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or other inappropriate behaviour, this procedure should be read in conjunction with the Staff Bullying Policy, which sets out the behaviour expected and provides details of the support available. The Grievance Policy sets out the informal and formal resolution processes for all forms of grievance including those arising from the Staff Bullying Policy.

The Grievance procedure should not be used to complain about a dismissal or disciplinary action. In these cases, employees should submit an appeal under the procedures set out in the relevant disciplinary policy.

Where an employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

If a grievance relates to a process which includes an appeal procedure, employees are directed to use that appeal procedure.

DLS operates a separate Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to report illegal activities or malpractice. However, employees who are directly affected by the matter in question or feel that they have been victimised for having blown the whistle, are entitled to raise the matter under this policy.

Where the complaint concerns behaviour by a relevant third party such as a visitor, a college employee, or a contractor, it will be dealt with under this policy as far as reasonably possible, with DLS seeking to engage with the third party accordingly.

This policy applies to group grievances, i.e. where more than one person is raising the same grievance. However, it does not apply to collective issues that are the subject of negotiation or consultation with the trade unions.

## Right to representation

Employees have the statutory right to be represented at any formal part of a grievance investigation. This representative can be either a work colleague, union shop steward from within the organisation (if applicable) or a full-time union officer, even if the company does not recognise that Union. The representative has the right to speak on behalf of the employee, state their case, and summarise the points made. However, the representative cannot answer questions on behalf of the employee.

## Procedure

### Informal resolution

Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally through a discussion between the Employee and their line manager, or any other individual concerned, in the course of everyday working relationships. Where the line manager is the subject of the issues raised, an employee should discuss their concerns with a member of College SMT.

Where the nature of the concern only affects the employee themselves, they can raise the matter informally with their immediate line manager in the first instance.

The manager will discuss the Employee's concerns with them in confidence, make discreet investigations, as appropriate, and attempt to address their concerns fairly and promptly.

Where the nature of the concern affects the employee's personal dealings or relationships with other employees, the Employee can choose either an informal direct approach, in which the individual addresses the issue themselves, or an informal approach with support, where the process is facilitated through the support of others.

### Direct Informal resolution process

If the Employee feels able to approach the other party directly, they should:

- do so at the earliest opportunity
- approach the other party in person or in writing
- provide specific examples of the unwanted behaviour
- explain why this has made them feel uncomfortable
- explain what their desired outcome is, or what possible solutions might be.

In many cases, this may resolve the issue without the need for further action and it may be possible to agree a constructive way of working in the future.

Support is available to help the employee prepare what they want to say, from the College HR department or their trade union representatives.

### **Informal resolution process with support.**

An Employee can also ask for support to achieve an informal resolution from their line manager or from a member of College SMT.

The Manager may request to meet separately with both parties to discuss the situation. They will establish the circumstances, identify the impact on the employee, any steps already taken to address the issue, and (if applicable) the response of the other party.

The Manager will then seek to agree a course of action with the Employee. This could involve a meeting between both parties, facilitated by the Manager. The spirit of such a meeting should focus on understanding the reason why the issue has been raised and how it can be resolved, exploring how it might be avoided in the future.

### **Mediation and Facilitated Discussions**

Mediation is a well-established, confidential process for resolving issues and improving working relationships between individuals. It is voluntary and can be used at any time, including during or after an informal or a formal process. The mediation process normally takes around a day, including a preliminary meeting with each party. Further information about this option is available from a member of SLT. A member of SLT (Senior Assistant Head Safeguarding, Vice Principal, Headteacher) is also able to offer a shorter facilitated discussion between the two parties involving an impartial facilitator. Provided both parties wish to participate, a request for mediation or a facilitated discussion can be made to the Bursar's office.

### **Formal resolution**

If it is not possible to resolve an issue informally, or if the matter is serious, the Employee should raise a formal grievance without unreasonable delay with the Deputy College Director or Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding) or Headteacher. This should:

- be submitted in writing
- set out the nature of the grievance including any relevant facts, dates and names of individuals involved
- focus on particular events or actions
- avoid using insulting or abusive language
- refer to any attempts at informal resolution
- include any desired outcome

The Deputy College Directors, College Director or headteacher will be responsible for hearing the grievance and will be referred to throughout the procedure as "the Responsible Person". The Responsible Person should have no conflict of interest with the grievance, i.e. has had no prior involvement in the case and has the appropriate experience to be able to evaluate the issues under investigation. The Responsible Person will be supported throughout the procedure by a member of the School HR Team who will provide procedural advice.

Where the Deputy College Directors, College Director or Headteacher is the subject of the grievance, the Employee should direct their complaint to the College Director, or if it is with regards to the College Director, to the Chair of Governors, whichever is appropriate, who will act as the Responsible Person. Depending on the nature of the grievance, it may be more appropriate to deal with the matter under the appropriate disciplinary procedure. If it is unclear, an initial fact-finding investigation will be undertaken to determine which procedure is the most appropriate to follow.

## Formal Grievance Meeting

The Responsible Person will invite the Employee to a formal grievance meeting. The grievance meeting should be held without unreasonable delay and the Employee should make every effort to attend. The employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to allow the Employee to explain their grievance in more detail and how they suggest it could be resolved. The meeting should be conciliatory rather than adversarial in nature and remain focused on the resolution of the Employee's grievance.

Following the formal grievance meeting, it may be possible for the Responsible Person to resolve the grievance fairly swiftly, in which case, please refer to the section labelled "Decision" below. However, depending on the nature of the grievance, it will usually be necessary to investigate.

The Responsible Person may carry out the investigation themselves or appoint someone else to do so. Alternatively, DLS may appoint an external investigator, as appropriate.

The Investigator will meet with the Employee again if necessary and any other individuals as they see appropriate ("Interviewees"), including any individual against whom the complaint is made, referred to as "the Respondent".

The Respondent and any Interviewees will be entitled to submit any relevant documentary evidence to the person investigating.

The content of the Employee's grievance should only be disclosed to the Respondent and other Interviewees, to the extent that is necessary to conduct a reasonable and comprehensive investigation into the grievance. If the written grievance needs to be shown to the Respondent or other Interviewees, it may be necessary to redact parts of the grievance and the reasons for this will be explained if required.

The Investigator will be supported throughout the investigation by a member of the School HR Team, who will provide procedural advice.

Any investigation should be conducted without unreasonable delay. Where there are unavoidable delays, all parties should be kept informed of progress.

A note of any investigation meeting will normally be made by a separate notetaker, or the HR Representative attending the meeting. Interviewees should be aware that the meeting notes will form part of the investigators report and may be used in any subsequent formal procedures such as disciplinary procedures.

The Investigator will document their findings, detailing the facts established and attaching any relevant meeting notes and documentary evidence collected as part of their investigation. Where a separate investigator has been appointed, this should be submitted to the

Responsible Person without unreasonable delay. The Responsible Person will carefully consider all the evidence.

## Decision

The Responsible Person will re-convene the formal grievance meeting with the Employee to discuss the findings of the investigation and next steps. An investigation report with attachments will usually be sent to the Employee in advance of the meeting. In some circumstances it may be necessary to redact some documents and/or meeting notes.

The Responsible Person may also meet with the Respondent separately, if they (the Responsible Person) think it is necessary or appropriate. A copy of any relevant parts of the investigation will be provided to the Respondent in advance of any such meeting.

At or after the formal grievance meeting (or re-convened meeting as appropriate), the Responsible Person will decide on the outcome of the grievance and what action will be taken to resolve the issue(s) (where appropriate).

The Responsible Person will provide written confirmation of their decision to the Employee (and any Respondent) without unreasonable delay and, wherever possible, within 10 working days of the grievance meeting (or re-convened meeting, as appropriate). The letter should set out clearly the outcome and any action which is to be taken to resolve the grievance. The Employee will also be informed that they can appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

Where the grievance is upheld, the Responsible Person may, in consultation with the relevant HR, instigate appropriate measures such as:

- the requirement to attend training
- disciplinary procedures (the investigation report may be used in the disciplinary process)
- steps to resolve the issues (whether or not the grievance is upheld), for instance a referral to a Mediation Service, to restore working relationships with the agreement of both parties.

Actions taken to resolve a grievance may have an impact on other individuals, including the Respondent. The Respondent should be informed separately of any aspect of the decision that affects them and the reasons for it. While confidentiality is of key importance in handling any grievance, in some circumstances there may be other individuals who may need to know the outcome, or certain aspects of the outcome that will impact on them. For example, a change to operating procedures or reporting lines. The Employee should be informed of who else will be told about the decision and the type of information they will be given, but they will not be entitled to information about any disciplinary process which may be commenced against the Respondent or other individual as a result of the grievance; this would be confidential to the Respondent or other individual as relevant.

If the grievance highlights any issues concerning policies, procedures or conduct (even if not sufficiently serious to merit separate disciplinary procedures) they should be addressed as soon as possible. Any action taken should be monitored and reviewed, as appropriate, so that it deals effectively with the issues.

If the Responsible Person considers that the grievance is malicious or vexatious, they may instigate a disciplinary process against the Employee.

Disciplinary action will not be taken against an Employee where a grievance is mistaken or otherwise ill-founded, but is not malicious or vexatious.

## The Appeal Procedure

Should the Employee wish to appeal the outcome of a formal grievance procedure, they should appeal in writing within 10 working days, wherever possible, of the receipt of the outcome letter, to the College Director, or if the responsible person is the College Director, the Chair of Governors. The Employee should set out the grounds of appeal and state whether the appeal is in respect of the whole or in respect of any specified part of any finding of fact or decision.

The College Director will hear the appeal or appoint an Appeal Manager, without unreasonable delay, who shall be a manager of equivalent or greater seniority than the Responsible Person, and who is impartial and has had no prior involvement in the case. An HR representative will be appointed to provide procedural advice to the Appeal Manager.

During the appeal proceedings, the Employee will not be entitled, except with the agreement of the Appeal Manager, to rely on any grounds of appeal not specified in their written appeal.

Where the appeal directly affects a fellow employee, that person should be advised of it, the likely timescale for considering it and its eventual outcome. If new information is required from them in relation to the grounds of appeal in order to decide the outcome, they will be provided with the necessary information and an opportunity to respond on those points. As with the initial decision, the Employee should be told if anyone else will be informed about the appeal decision and the type of information they will be given.

An appeal hearing should be arranged without unreasonable delay.

An HR Representative may attend to take notes of the appeal hearing.

The Employee may make representations in person and/or in writing at the appeal hearing. Copies of the investigation summary, outcome letter and any supporting documentation should be supplied to all parties in good time ahead of the hearing. The Appeal Manager will receive a full set of documents relied upon in the Responsible Person's decision.

Unless the Employee has indicated they do not wish to make representations in person, they must make every effort to attend the hearing. If they fail to attend without good reason, or are persistently unable to do so, the Appeal Manager may proceed on the evidence available in the Employee's absence. The Employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

Others involved in the investigation e.g., the Responsible Person, the Investigator or the Interviewees, may be asked to attend the appeal hearing by the Appeal Manager, if there are any questions that the Appeal Manager wishes to ask them.

The Appeal Manager may set time-limits for each stage of the proceedings, including the hearing itself, so that any appeal will be heard and determined as expeditiously as is reasonably practicable. The appeal hearing may be adjourned to gather further information, provided that any adjournment will not lead to unreasonable delay.

Following the appeal hearing, the Appeal Manager will consider the facts of the case and may uphold or dismiss the appeal, in whole or in part.

The Appeal Manager will notify the Employee of their decision in writing, setting out reasons for the decision. This should occur without unreasonable delay and wherever possible within

10 working days of the appeal hearing. A copy of the letter will be sent to the College Director. The Respondent should be advised of any parts of the decision relevant to them.

The Appeal Manager may decide to vary the above procedure as they deem appropriate, provided the appeal is dealt with fairly and impartially and without unreasonable delay.

There is no further right to appeal.

## General Principles

At any stage of the procedure, those involved in attempting a resolution or in investigating a complaint must act fairly and in accordance with good practice and the principles set out below. Any person against whom a complaint has been made has the right to know the nature and sufficient details of the complaint in order to respond. It is important that no decision is taken until the complaint has been investigated and any Respondent has had the opportunity to respond. All persons involved in the procedure should be fully conversant with the procedure and guidance contained in this document.

## Communication

The Responsible Person must ensure there is clear, regular and confidential communication with the Employee and anyone else involved in the grievance throughout the process. This helps to avoid misunderstandings, stress or other mental health issues, and further action, such as subsequent grievances.

## Formal Meetings

It is recommended that at least 5 working days' notice is given to attend any meeting under the formal resolution process, including investigation meetings, grievance meetings and appeal hearings.

Where circumstances require it, and in particular, to avoid delay, the meeting or hearing may be held by way of video or teleconference with the agreement of all parties, but will not be recorded.

## Companions

The Employee may be accompanied by a work colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union, to any meetings under the formal resolution process. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany an Employee. The Employee should provide enough time for DLS to deal with the companion's attendance at the meeting and in good time ahead of any meeting.

If the chosen companion is unavailable at the time DLS has proposed for the meeting, the Employee must notify DLS immediately so that an alternative time can be arranged. DLS will postpone the hearing to a time proposed by the Employee provided that the alternative time is reasonable and ideally not more than five working days after the date originally proposed. The Employee should bear in mind the practicalities of the arrangements and seek to avoid choosing a companion whose availability will unduly delay the process.

The companion will be required to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

The companion will be allowed to address the meeting, to put and sum up the Employee's case, respond on behalf of the Employee to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the Employee during the meeting. The companion does not, however, have the right to answer questions on the Employee's behalf, address the hearing if the Employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.

A companion does not have to agree to attend a meeting if invited. The role is voluntary. They will receive paid time off work to attend the meeting.

It may also be appropriate to permit any Respondent to be accompanied at meetings under the formal resolution procedure.

## Confidentiality

In order to safeguard individuals, confidentiality must be strictly respected, and information limited to those who need to know (and only to the extent necessary) for the purposes of the operation of these procedures and for maintenance of good order at DLS. DLS reserves the right to seek advice from its advisors or to involve appropriate external authorities if it believes that it is under an obligation to do so. Any breach of confidentiality by any party may result in disciplinary action being instigated.

## Timescales

The Employee should make a complaint in a timely fashion (normally immediately after the incident or at the latest within three months of the most recent incident or occurrence of the behaviour complained about). If there is good reason, this timeframe can be extended, for example where a complainant does not feel able to make a complaint without initial support or counselling.

Grievances should be resolved without unreasonable delay in the interests of all parties. Where there are unavoidable delays, the Responsible Person should explain the reasons for the delay and keep all parties informed of progress. If anyone involved has concerns about the timeframes, they should raise them with the HR supporting the grievance.

## Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest can be defined as a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgement or actions regarding one interest will be unduly influenced by another interest. If any party has concerns about conflicts of interest, they should raise them immediately with the HR representative dealing with the case to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## Recording of meetings

Meetings held under this policy should not be electronically recorded (whether audio or video) by any party. Any such recordings made without consent may result in disciplinary action. Instead, there should be someone present to take a note of the meeting and attendees will be given the opportunity to comment on their accuracy. The meeting notes will provide a summary of the key discussion points and are not intended to be verbatim.

Any person interviewed during the investigation will be sent a copy of the notes of the meeting and asked to confirm it is a factually accurate note of their interview. Any proposed amendments should be received by the person investigating within 5 working days of the Interviewee receiving the meeting notes.

Where it is not possible to agree a single note, both versions will be provided to the Responsible Person (where this is not the person investigating).

In exceptional circumstances, names and identities of Interviewees may be kept confidential and not disclosed to a party, for instance in cases where there is a genuine risk of physical harm or retaliation. If any Interviewee has concerns about revealing their identity, they should raise this with the person investigating without delay so that a view may be reached with the assistance of HR.

## Redacting

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to redact documents and/or meeting notes. Redacting may happen when information is presented that is not directly relevant to the grievance or its relevant context and which could cause offence, is inflammatory, financially or commercially sensitive, personal data and/or otherwise confidential. Any redacting is usually done by HR in conjunction with the Responsible Person.

## Decision making

Where evidence is contested or contradictory, the decision as to what happened will be taken on the balance of probabilities, i.e. whether it is more probable than not that the evidence in question occurred.

What is perceived by one individual as inappropriate behaviour may not necessarily be perceived in the same way by another. When deciding whether behaviour is inappropriate, factors that will be taken into consideration include the impact on the individual, the standards set out in the Code of Behaviour, and the motive or intent of the individual demonstrating the behaviour.

## Record keeping

DLS will keep a written record of any grievance cases, including the grievance; any investigation report; the decision and actions taken; the reason for the actions; whether an appeal was lodged; the outcome of the appeal and any subsequent developments. Records will be treated as confidential and be kept no longer than necessary in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. This Act also gives individuals the right to request and have access to certain personal data stored about them.

Additionally, DLS may be required to provide information to the Director of Education.

## Accessibility and support

If any aspect of the grievance procedure causes an Employee or their companion difficulty on account of any disability that they may have, or if they need assistance because English is not their first language, they should raise this issue with the HR Representative supporting the grievance, who will arrange for any reasonable adjustments to be made.

A grievance process can be stressful for everyone involved and different individuals will respond differently to stressful situations. Sometimes, a process may cause extreme distress and even impact on a person's mental health. Where there are signs of this happening to anyone involved in the process, DLS will consider whether the process can be adjusted in some way and managers involved in the process should signpost the individual to support available to them within DLS or to their GP, if appropriate.

### Malicious or vexatious complaints

A vexatious complaint is one that is made solely or mainly to harass, annoy or subdue another person, or something that is unreasonable, without foundation, frivolous, repetitive, burdensome or unwarranted.

A malicious complaint is one that is made with the intention of causing harm by seeking to defame a colleague or manager, through knowingly providing false or misleading information or withholding information about an incident or issue.

### Overlapping procedures

If a complaint falls across more than one DLS procedure, DLS will deal with the matter as flexibly, fairly and proportionately as possible. In the event that it is not possible to reach a decision about identifying the appropriate procedure to follow through discussion, the matter should be referred to the College Director, whose decision will be final.

## Appendix 1.

### Staff Code of Behaviour

This code of behaviour is a brief summary of the information contained in the Staff duties supplied as part of the contract of employment and the staff handbook. The code of behaviour is not intended to circumvent or overrule what is contained with the contract of employment.

### Working with Students

In their dealings with students the College expects that all staff will:

- Ensure their relationships with students are never of a kind that could compromise their professional responsibilities.
- Promote College standards of student behaviour.

### Working with Colleagues

Staff must attend meetings and other commitments on time and meet other deadlines on which their colleagues depend.

Staff must adhere to the College's policies and procedures because their actions have consequences for others.

Smoking is not permitted on College premises.

### Professional Prejudice

DLS sets an expectation of mutual respect among all staff at all times regardless of professional role, and we therefore do our best to avoid 'professional prejudice'. Professional prejudice is the belief, based on presumption rather than evidence, that one part of an organisation's staff is in some way more professional than another part of its staff, or that some skills within the organisation are more important or somehow superior to others. Professional prejudice harms the effectiveness of organisations because it attacks victims' self-esteem.

Professional prejudice is frequently unintentional and inadvertent and, for example, can show as:

- Not understanding that what Support Staff support is the College's mission
- Failing to act on instructions correctly or respond to a colleague's request with reasonable promptness
- Careless use of language when referring to colleagues
- Assuming that other colleagues are under less work pressure than oneself
- Failing to treat a colleague's skills and abilities with the respect one would expect for one's own.

### Representing the College

In order to preserve the reputation of the College, staff must:

- Obtain approval from the College Director, or in the College Director's absence, another member of SLT, before contacting the press.
- Check with the relevant budget holder before committing College resources other than those for which they have responsibility.
- Take care over the use of College's name in association with all communication, in any format, whether virtual or otherwise, and in particular:
  - Ensure that written communication conforms to the highest professional practice.
  - Check carefully, especially if they are uncertain, in regard to spelling, punctuation, grammar, content, factual accuracy and tone.
  - Maintain professional standards of conduct towards others when acting in a College capacity, including following the guidance on Alcohol at Work (refer to staff handbook).
  - Dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity and with due regard for the conclusion's others may draw from their attire (refer to staff handbook).
  - Use appropriate language at all times.

## Additional Professional Responsibilities

Whilst it is proper that staff should receive the rewards of their own professional and academic endeavours, it is also essential to the mutual interests of both staff and the College that these are not achieved at any cost to primary contractual commitments. To this end, staff should be clearly aware of the importance of ensuring that the College Director is kept informed as to their intentions in the following areas:

- Except in the case of employees with supply contracts, the proposed undertaking of additional paid employment.
- Any interest they may have regarding the appointment of staff, selection of students or contracts with which they may be involved on the College's behalf.
- Private tuition of DLS students by DLS staff for payment is not permitted.
- Private tutoring of non-DLS students must be kept entirely separate from staff's College work and staff should not use College stationery, email, telephones or premises for this purpose.

In addition, staff are reminded that they are expected at all times to observe the following professional obligations:

- To preserve the confidentiality of information relating to the College's staff, students, finances, marketing and strategic planning, together with any further information rightly to be judged the property of the College (except as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy).
- To preserve this same degree of confidentiality for twelve months after leaving the College's employment.
- In the event of their being offered hospitality or gifts of any kind to ensure that they inform the College Director or line manager.

## College Property

In order to preserve the quality of the College's environment and physical resources staff must ensure that:

- They, and students for whom they are responsible, look after College premises and property which they use,
- Procedures for borrowing College equipment are observed,
- Energy is conserved wherever possible,
- The security of College property is maintained as well as possible and not put at risk,
- They pay the College for any costs incurred by the personal use of College equipment (e.g., phone, fax, photocopier). However, in calculating this, staff should bear in mind any costs they may have incurred by the use of their own equipment on College business (e.g., phone call on College business made from home).

Staff should also assist with the security of the College by directing to Reception anyone who they think might be a stranger on site.

## Staff Standard of Appearance

The broad standards we should all adhere to are:

- when working with students or other staff, the standard of appearance should be smart.
- when representing the College, for example at Parents' Evenings and Open Evenings, the standard of appearance should be smart business attire.

In cases where these standards are not upheld, they should be dealt with through the line management chain.

These standards are offered to assist staff in the fundamentals of staff professional discretion and SMT's duty to support.

When working with students or other staff, the standard of appearance should be smart-casual as a minimum. Clothing which:

- displays inappropriate slogans or images
- reveals underwear or inappropriate bare flesh
- is dirty, holed or fraying
- resembles beach-wear, including shorts and flip flops

is likely to be judged inappropriate.

There may be obvious exceptions, however, for example, sportswear and protective clothing appropriate to role. Again, staff professional discretion is key. If in doubt, ask. When representing the College, for example, on Open Evenings and Parents' Evenings, the standard of appearance should be 'smart'. Visitors should feel that staff have dressed well out of courtesy to them. Please speak to your line manager or any member of SMT if you require clarification.

## Alcohol at Work

The definition of 'at work' is wider in law than one might think. The College would, for example, be exposed to 'vicarious liability' if a member of staff behaved inappropriately while under the influence of alcohol during the course of his or her employment. In addition, an individual employee would also be personally liable for their actions. This applies even if the alcohol is consumed outside the College's timetabled day.

'Alcohol at work' should therefore be taken to mean 'alcohol consumed during, or directly following, a work-related activity'.

Within this definition, all staff have a duty to ensure their behaviour is not so affected by alcohol that they infringe the College's policies; become a nuisance to other people; cause other people to feel they ought, or need to take responsibility for them; bring the reputation of the College into disrepute. Where alcohol is consumed in an informal, social setting, e.g. end of term meal, it is nevertheless the duty of a member or staff to be mindful of this guidance.