



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Parents/Carers Complaints Procedure

Introduction

We trust that your children will be happy and enabled to achieve well at the school. However, if you are unhappy with something that has happened at the school there are procedures in place to deal with complaints.

The following information is to help you resolve the problem. You can be assured that any complaint will be investigated, in confidence, in a fair, thorough and sensitive manner.

The following describes the formal procedure for dealing with complaints over matters for which the governors/headteacher are responsible.

Stage 1: The Class Teacher

All complaints will be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible. Most complaints can be resolved swiftly through discussion with the class teacher but if a satisfactory conclusion is not achieved, then an appointment should be made to discuss the matter with the headteacher.

Stage 2: The Headteacher

If attempts to settle the complaint informally have failed, the headteacher will supply the complainant with the name and address of the Clerk to the Governing Body, together with a copy of the complaints procedure.

Such complaints are recorded in a log kept in the office and are scrutinised by the Governors.

Stage 3: The Formal Complaints Procedure – (contacting the Chair of Governors)

1. The Governing Body's complaints procedure does not replace the arrangements for dealing with certain types of complaint that fall outside the remit of the Governing Body's complaints procedure. A number of other procedures already exist:
 - Admissions Procedures;
 - Child Protection Procedures;
 - Curriculum Complaints Procedures;
 - Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures;
 - Exclusions Procedures;
 - Special Educational Needs Procedures;
 - Procedures for querying public examination results.

2. Formal procedures only need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising concerns remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.
3. The member of staff with responsibility for the operation and management of the school complaints procedure is the Headteacher.
4. The complainant should set out the complaint in writing and send it to the Clerk of the Governing Body. The written notification should make clear the grievance and state that it is to be formally considered under these arrangements. If necessary, the school will offer the complainant the opportunity to express the complaint orally and for someone at the school to produce a written version with which the complainant can agree.
5. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 7 days and arrange for it to be investigated and considered by the complaints sub-committee of the Governing Body. The sub-committee will consist of three members who have not previously been involved with the subject of the complaint.
6. If an employee of the school is named in the formal complaint, the Clerk to the Governing Body will inform that employee immediately on receipt of the complaint.
7. The complainant's hearing will be conducted in private unless in very exceptional circumstances the sub-committee decides otherwise.
8. The complainant is offered the opportunity to make an oral presentation to the sub-committee to supplement the written complaint. He or she may be accompanied, if desired, by a friend or representative and, where necessary, an interpreter.
9. The headteacher and the Chair of Governors should not be members of the Complaints Sub-Committee, which must be independent and seen to be impartial.
10. The Clerk will give at least seven days' written notice of the hearing to the Complaints' Sub-committee, the complainant and the headteacher. The notice will specify the date, time and place of the hearing.
11. The aim of the hearing, which will be held in private, will be to resolve the complaint, where appropriate, and achieve reconciliation between school and the complainant. However, it is recognised that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the hearing does not find in their favour.
12. The Clerk to the Governors will be present at all meetings of the sub-committee to record proceedings and decisions reached. The Governors will decide whether the minutes of the meeting are to be made available or deemed to be confidential. The Clerk will not be a member of the sub-committee.
13. The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing as soon as possible after the meeting.

14. The complaints sub-committee may decide that the Local Education Authority or the Diocesan Authorities have a role to play in offering objective and professional advice or perhaps to act in a mediating capacity (stage 4).

15. A record will be kept of all complaints.

Checklist for panel hearing

The panel will take account of the following points:

- the hearing is as informal as possible;
- the headteacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses;
- the complainant may question both the headteacher and the witnesses after each has spoken;
- the panel may ask questions at any point;
- the complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint;
- the headteacher is invited to sum up the school's actions and responses to the complaint;
- both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues;
- the Chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale (5 working days).

Updated by Pupil & Staff Welfare Committee: January 2018

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Next Review Date: January 2020

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Procedure for Complaints

**Complaints which concern
the School**

**Complaints which
do not concern
the School**

