



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Evesham

Complaints Policy and Procedures

St Mary's is a Catholic Primary School, part of the Holy Family Multi Academy Company in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

As a Catholic Primary School our aim is to develop, within each child, an understanding of his or her Catholic faith. It is hoped that with this knowledge children will grow into responsible Catholic adults who will be able to demonstrate their faith and concern for others and continue the worship of God.

The school provides a full curriculum and through the presentation of the curriculum it is hoped children will develop the necessary skills for adulthood and an understanding that the skills should be for the benefit of everyone, which is an important part of Catholic life.

Policy written: January 2015

Approved by the Governors: January 2018

To be reviewed: January 2019

**'Through God's Love
We Will Achieve'**

St. Mary's
School:

Catholic Primary
Complaints

Procedure

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than three months after the event, will not be considered.

Raising a Concern or Complaint

1) Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. The majority of concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage. In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher (or to the Chair of the Governing Body, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher). If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

2) Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, your complaint should be passed to the Clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the Chair of the governing body.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you (see attached documentation)

You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the Head Teacher, or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate.

The Head Teacher (or Chair) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you

may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns. It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the Head Teacher (or Chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within five days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion. If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within ten school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided for your convenience.

Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three members of the governing body. This will usually take place within ten school days of receipt of your request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.

Meeting Request Form

I wish to meetto discuss the following matter:
Brief details of topic to be discussed:
Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting:
Your name: Relationship with school (e.g. parent of pupil on school roll): Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed): Address: Telephone Numbers Daytime Evening: Email address:
Signed: Date:

(Please complete this form and return it to the school office)

School use: Date form received: Date response sent:
Received by: Response sent by:

Formal Request Form

Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage of the procedure.

Your name:

Relationship with school (e.g. parent of pupil on school roll):

Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed):

Address:

Telephone Numbers

Daytime Evening:

Email address:

Please give concise details of your complaint, including dates, names of witnesses etc, to allow the matter to be investigated fully:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached =

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (i.e. who have you spoken with, or written to and what was the outcome?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signed:

Date:

School use:

Date form received: Date acknowledgement sent:

Received by: Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:			
Date:			

Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage of the procedure.

Your name:

Address:

Telephone Numbers

Daytime Evening:

Email address:

Dear Sir/Madam

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on And I am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to And I received a response from on

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and the response(s) from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached =

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signed:

Date:

School use:
Date form received: Date acknowledgement sent:
Received by: Acknowledgement sent by:

Request referred to:			
Date:			

Governing Body Meetings

Complaints Panel

If the school receives a formal complaint about one of the limited number of matters, that is not dealt with by another statutory process, it may be necessary to convene a governing body panel to consider the matter and formulate a response.

The complaint is likely to relate to matters such as:

- The content or the application of a governing body policy
- School facilities
- Services that the school provides

If a governing body committee already has delegated power with respect to a policy that is being complained of, a panel of members from that committee should be convened. Otherwise the clerk should convene a panel of three Governors, who have not previously been involved with the complaint.

The complainant should submit the details of their concerns, in writing, to the clerk. The clerk will seek similar written responses from the school, where this is necessary.

A meeting of the panel will take place, usually within ten school days, to consider the matter. The complainant (who may be accompanied by a friend if they wish) and representative(s) from the school (who may also be accompanied by workplace colleagues or representatives from their professional associations) may be invited to attend this meeting in order to clarify the matter. As the panel meeting is intended to be investigatory, rather than adversarial, the persons giving evidence or making representations to the panel will normally attend separately.

When the panel has collected sufficient information, it will deliberate and then inform the complainant, the Head Teacher and the governing body of the outcome, in writing.

Consideration of the complaint by the governing body and the school, save for any actions that are agreed, will terminate at this point.

If the complainant is not satisfied that the appropriate procedure has been followed, they may request a review of that process by another panel of the governing body.

Review Meeting

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of three members of the Governing Body. This will usually take place within ten school days of receipt of a written request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests, from any of the parties, to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.

The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant.

The panel will then invite representatives of the school (usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that has considered the matter), as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint.

The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.

The complainant and the school representative(s) will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within five school days of the panel meeting.

The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.

Model Letters

a) Response to spurious complainant

Dear

Following receipt of your communications and careful consideration of the same, I regret that I am unable to deal with this matter under the Governing Body's Complaints Procedure as:

[It will be appropriate to include SOME of the following statements]

- You have not identified any specific actions of which you might complain
- Your concerns are presented as conclusions rather than specific actions of which you complain.
- The concerns that you identify relate to historical actions and any evidence which might have enabled an objective investigation of your complaint is no longer available.
- The substance of your complaint has been addressed under this procedure already.
- The concerns that you raise do not fall within the scope of this procedure.
- You have not identified any potential sources of evidence which might allow the matter to be investigated.

If you wish my decision to be reviewed then you may follow the procedure set out in the school's Formal Complaint Procedure, by writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Or Chair of Governing Body

b) Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint and invitation to meet

Dear

I have received your formal complaint, dated I am grateful that you have brought this to my attention.

The school and Governing Body take any complaint most seriously. Therefore I would like to meet with you, as soon as possible, so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. You are welcome to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend, if you would find this helpful. Please telephone....., in order to arrange an appointment./ I can offer you an appointment at on,..... Please let me know if this is convenient.

I hope that we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not I will ensure that the appropriate investigation takes place. This should begin within 5 days of our meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher
Or Chair of Governing Body

- c) Acknowledgement of receipt of formal complaint referred by a third party [e.g. LA, Diocese, MP]

Dear

I have received a copy of the documentation that you sent to setting out a complaint about This has been passed to the school as it has responsibility for these matters.

The school and Governing Body take any complaint most seriously. Therefore I would like to meet with you, as soon as possible, so that I may understand the details of your concerns more clearly. You are welcome to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend, if you would find this helpful. Please telephone, in order to arrange an appointment./ I can offer you an appointment at on Please let me know if this is convenient.

Meanwhile I would be grateful if you would complete and return the Formal Complaint Form that is enclosed, along with details of the school's complaints procedure.

I hope that we will be able to resolve your concerns through our meeting, but if not I will ensure that the appropriate investigation takes place. This should begin within 5 days of our meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher
Or Chair of Governing Body

- d) Acknowledgements of receipt of formal complaint and advising complainant that the matter has been referred

Dear

I have received your formal complaint, dated Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

However, the matters that are of concern to you are the responsibility of the Governing Body/Pupil Discipline Committee/LA/Diocese/service provider, so I have forwarded your documentation to You should be contacted, in the near future, to be advised of how they intend to proceed.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

- e) Acknowledgements of receipt of formal complaint and advising complainant that the matter is being dealt with under a confidential school procedure

Dear

I have received your formal complaint, dated I am grateful that you have brought this to my attention.

The school and Governing Body take any complaint most seriously. Therefore I have initiated an immediate investigation. It is possible that the investigator will wish to meet with you to clarify the evidence that you have provided so far. If so, he/she will write to you to make suitable arrangements.

As your concerns relate to the conduct/capability of a member of staff, the investigation will be carried out under the school's personnel procedures. This means that the detail of the procedure and its outcome must remain confidential to the school and the member of staff concerned.

OR

As your concerns relate to the behaviour of a pupil, the investigation will be carried out under the school's pupil conduct and disciplinary procedures. This means that the detail of the procedure and its outcome must remain confidential to the school and the parents of the child concerned.

In due course, I may be able to provide you with some information about the outcomes of the investigation and the processes that have been followed, but in any event will let you know when the matter has been concluded.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher
Or Chair of Governing Body

f) NOTIFICATION OF DECISION REGARDING FORMAL COMPLAINT

Dear

Following receipt of your complaint and careful consideration of all the available relevant evidence, I/the panel have/has concluded that: - There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion, so the complaint cannot be upheld. If you are able to provide additional evidence forthwith I/we will reconsider this decision.

OR - The concern is not substantiated by the evidence in that

OR - The concern was substantiated in part/in full, as The school will review its practices/procedures..... with the intention of avoiding any reoccurrence. Parents will be informed in due course of any policy changes.

OR - In order to address fully the matters investigated, the school has initiated appropriate internal procedures. Due to the nature of these procedures, their outcome must remain strictly confidential. We are confident, however, that the circumstances that gave rise to your complaint should not recur

OR - In order to address fully the matters of concern that you identified, the panel recommended that the Governing Body should review its policy, as a matter of urgency. We are confident that this should prevent similar concerns arising in future. I hope that we may now put this matter behind us and work together for the benefit of your child's progress.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher/Chair of Governing Body/Chair of Panel

g) REVIEW OUTCOME NOTIFICATION

Dear

Having carefully considered your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the Governing Body Complaints Review Panel has concluded that the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint.

Summary of reasons

Therefore, the matter is now closed as far as the school is concerned.

OR

Having carefully considered your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the Governing Body Complaints Review Panel has concluded that the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except

Therefore, the following action will be taken

Once this action has been completed the school will consider the matter to be closed.

OR

Having carefully considered your representations in the context of the relevant evidence, the Governing Body Complaints Review Panel has concluded that the school followed the relevant procedure appropriately in respect of your complaint except

However the panel determined that this procedural failure did not affect the outcome of the consideration of your complaint so, while we regret this error, we will now consider this matter to be closed as far as the school is concerned.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of Complaints Review Panel
c.c. Head Teacher
Chair of Governors