



St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Complaints Policy

Policy reviewed- September 2016

Due for renewal- September 2017

Signed by Chair of Governors- Fr McAllister

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Policy on Complaints

1 Introduction

1.1 We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

1.2 If any parents or carers are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

1.3 We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the LA. If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the LA.

1.4 All parents and carers have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The complaints process

3.1 If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.

3.2 a Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. (This meeting may be delegated to the deputy headteacher). The headteacher considers any such concern very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly within ten working days. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

b Should the concern remain unresolved after the headteacher's investigation The complainant may move directly to 3.6 where the Governor's Grievance and Disciplinary Committee will review whether the investigation has been dealt with appropriately. Should the dialogue persist between the deputy / headteacher and the complainant or if the deputy/ headteacher believes s/he cannot resolve the concern satisfactorily then it may be reasonable that the headteacher refer the matter directly to 3.6 where the Governors' Grievance and Disciplinary Committee will review whether the investigation has been dealt with appropriately.

3.3 Should any parents or carers have a complaint about the headteacher, they should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents or carers are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

3.4 If a parent makes a formal complaint which doesn't follow the procedure set out in this policy the Chair of Governors' may request that the headteacher carries out an investigation provided that the complaint is not about him or her. The Chair will inform the complainant of this and the complaint may be resolved at this point. Should the complaint remain unresolved the Chair of Governor's will resume to 3.6 and organise a meeting with the complainant.

3.5 Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter or those instances outlined in 3.2b should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the chair of governors.

3.6 The governing body must consider all written complaints within three school weeks of receipt. It's Grievance and Disciplinary Committee may arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and may invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

3.7 After hearing/ reviewing all the evidence, the governors' Grievance and Disciplinary Committee will consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing within 3 school weeks. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

3.8 If the parent is unhappy with the outcome of the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee's decision he/ she may appeal this to the school's Appeal's Committee. They will consider whether the Complaint's process has been properly adhered too and inform the complainant of their decision within 3 school weeks.

3.9 If the complaint is not resolved at school level, a parent may make representation to the local government ombudsman. In the first instance, they should contact the LGO advice team on 0300 0610614 or 0845 6021983 8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

3.10 If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

4 *Monitoring and review*

4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly.

4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents and carers, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

4.3 This policy will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.