

St Anne's RC 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 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.
- Any person who raises a concern should do so with confidentiality.

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. Many 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. If you are still unhappy you should escalate this to the Phase leader or Assistant Headteacher who oversees that phase:

EYFS and Key Stage 1 Miss Harrison

Key Stage 2 Mr Owen

SEN Mrs Broderick

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. The written complaint should be on the complaints form (appendix 1) and addressed to the head teacher, or to the clerk to the governing body, as appropriate. 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. The completed form, should then be placed in a sealed envelope and sent to the school office. If the complaint is about the head teacher, it should be addressed to the clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the chair of the governing body.

Next Steps:

1. You will be notified that your complaint has been received by telephone from the school office.
2. The head teacher, a senior member of staff (or chair) will :
 - Contact you, usually by telephone to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. You may be invited in to school to clarify the nature of your concern. 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.
 - Decide how the school intends to proceed with investigating the concern/ complaint, including an indication of the anticipated timescale.
 - Carry out the investigation.
 - Contact you with the outcome of the investigation either over the telephone/ by inviting you in to school for a meeting or in writing.
3. If the complaint is about the headteacher it will be investigated, by the Chair of governors and the chair will appoint an additional governor to support them with the process. The governors involved will:
 - Inform the complainant of how they intend to proceed in writing (usually within 10 days of receipt of the complaint in writing)
 - Obtain relevant documentation from the school.
 - Arrange to meet with any staff involved.
 - Agree a conclusion following their investigation.
 - Write to the complainant (copied to the headteacher) with the outcome of the investigation. The letter should include what was investigated, conclusions and reasoning behind it.
4. 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.
5. Any such request must be made in writing on Form 3 to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure.
6. The school will telephone you to say they have received your request for a review of the process and the procedure described below will be followed

Review Process

- A review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. These will be governors who have not been part of the original investigation.
- This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request or at the earliest possible time.
- The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of your written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations will be considered sympathetically.

- Following a review of the process followed by the school the Review panel will write to you with the outcome of their review.

Governing body meetings regarding other complaints not dealt with in the above procedures.

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 3 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 10 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 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 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 5 school days of the panel meeting.

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