

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Complaints Procedure Statement

*Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we learn and grow through the love of Jesus.
Our community is a safe, caring and happy place where everyone is supported and valued.
We encourage and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential,
spiritually, academically, morally and socially.
We inspire others with a love of learning and aim for excellence in everything we do.
Through our own faith, we treat one another the way we would like to be treated.
We help every child to be gentle and fair: to always do their best.*

'Learning through the Love of Jesus Christ'

Introduction

Here at St Joseph's we are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all the children. The achievement, attitude and well-being of all our children matter. This statement outlines the procedure if there are complaints against the school.

Since 1 September 2003 Governing Bodies (GBs) of all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools in England were required, under Section 29 of the [Education Act 2002](#), to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides. The law also requires the procedure to be publicised.

The governing body has agreed to use the procedure provided by the Catholic Education Service to deal with any issues relating to staff discipline, conduct, sickness or grievance. This document has been drawn up using advice from the Education Funding Agency's guidance on creating an academy complaints procedure and the requirements set out in schedule 1, part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

School Complaints Procedure

General Principles:

This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the School, including a complaint in relation to a child with SEND, whether they have an EHC plan or not. An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

To allow for 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 will not be considered.

Should you complaint relate to children's safeguarding or protection, please refer to the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The complaints procedure consists of three stages: an informal stage, a formal stage and a panel hearing.

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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. 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 do not feel your concern or complaint has been dealt with appropriately or matters remain unresolved then you should contact Miss Strachan the Head Teacher.

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 Mrs Hannon in the school office.

2) Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, [or to the School Office, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher] who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately.

A Complaint Form is provided to assist you.

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 Head Teacher or to the Chair of Governors via the School Office, as appropriate.

The Head Teacher [or Chair] may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to seek 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 5 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 10 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.

3) Panel

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal stage they can choose to take the matter to a Panel. The Panel will be made up of 3 or 5 members including members of the governing body who have not been involved directly in the initial inquiry and at least one member who is independent of the management and running of the school. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your written request.

The complainant will be invited to attend the Panel hearing and may be accompanied if they wish. The complainant will be given reasonable notice of the date of the panel hearing and clear information on the process to enable them to attend will be given.

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It is vital that during the meeting all parties act in a reasonable way. Any behaviour which is aggressive or threatening will not be tolerated. If a complainant behaves unacceptably they may be asked to leave the meeting.

The Panel can decide to:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that issues of a similar nature do not recur

The Panel will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests 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. You, and the school representative[s], will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.

At the end of this stage the complaints procedure has been exhausted.

As St Joseph's is an Academy, the Local Authority cannot investigate complaints. The role of the Education Funding Agency (EFA) is to check whether the complaint has been dealt with properly by the academy. The EFA will not overturn an academy's decision about a complaint. However, if the EFA find an academy did not deal with a complaint properly, they will request the complaint is looked at again from the appropriate stage.

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School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to the Head Teacher (or Clerk to the governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your name:.....

Relationship with school (eg parent of a pupil on roll)

.....

Pupil's name (if relevant to your complaint):

.....

Your Address:

Daytime telephone number..... Mobile telephone number

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses, etc), to allow the matter to be fully investigated (you may continue on separate paper or attach additional documents):

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?)

(1)

Date: September 2017

Date of next review: September 2018

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School Complaint Form**

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

Signature:.....

Date:.....

SCHOOL USE:

Date form received:.....

Received by:.....

Date acknowledgement sent:.....

Acknowledgement sent by:.....

Complaint referred to:.....

Date referred:.....