



**St Mary's CE Primary School  
N8 7QN**

# **Complaints Procedure**

Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

## **Our Vision**

As we love, we flourish  
As we flourish, we aspire  
As we aspire, we achieve  
Together, we are a family.

Friendship, Compassion, Hope, Wisdom,  
Community, Endurance.

December 2019

This procedure sets out how St Mary's Primary School deals with any complaints it receives.

The School's Complaint's Procedure is devised with the intention that it will:

- Usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- Be simple to use and understand;
- Treat complaints confidentially;
- Allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- Inform future practice so that the problem is unlikely to recur;
- Reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as they work together for the good of the pupils in the school;
- Ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil would never be affected by a parental complaint;
- Discourage anonymous complaints;
- Actively encourage strong home-school links;
- Ensure that all staff have opportunities to discuss and understand the school's response to concerns and complaints made by parents;
- Ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the complaint;
- Regularly review its system for monitoring concerns and complaints received from parents.

#### What is a complaint?

For the purpose of this policy a complaint is defined as 'an expression of significant or sustained dissatisfaction where a pupil, parent or carer seeks a specific action to address the issue'.

#### Expressing a concern

A complaint is not the same as a concern. A concern is defined as "an expression of worry or doubt over an important issue for which reassurances are sought". If you have a concern we would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to resolve your concern. The majority of concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to a member of staff.

After hearing your concern we will act as quickly as we can; we will let you know the timescale within which you will get a response.

#### Complaints not in the scope of this procedure

The scope of complaints can be far reaching. However, not all complaints can be resolved within the school. For the following, there are statutory procedures to be followed:

- complaints against the curriculum
- admissions and appeals;
- appeals against statements of special educational needs; and
- appeals about exclusions

This procedure does not apply to internal disciplinary matters, internal grievances or staff whistleblowing.

### Discriminatory Incidents

In order to comply with the statutory requirements laid down in the Equality Act 2010, the school has a 'Race Policy'. Should the school receive a complaint which is construed as a discriminatory incident, we will follow the procedures laid down in the school's Race Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **Our complaints procedure**

#### Stage 1 – Complain to Class Teacher

Please contact your child's class teacher, or other appropriate member of staff, and arrange a time when you can discuss your complaint.

It may be possible to give a response immediately, but where any investigation or information is required, a response will generally be given within five school days of the investigation being completed or the information being obtained.

#### Stage 2 Complain to Headteacher

You may make a Stage 2 complaint if:

- you are not satisfied with the response to your Stage 1 complaint; or
- the complaint is about a teacher

A Stage 2 complaint should be directed to the headteacher. Note that the headteacher may nominate a member of the senior leadership team to respond to a Stage 2 complaint on his/her behalf.

If the complaint is about the headteacher, the complaint should be directed to the Chair of the Governing Body. Note that the Chair of the Governing Body may nominate a non-staff member of the Governing Body to respond to a Stage 2 complaint on his/her behalf.

At this stage the complaint will need to be recorded on the complaints recording form, (see Complaints Form Stage 2, attached below).

Following receipt of a Stage 2 complaint, the headteacher or governor (if the complaint is about the headteacher) will, as soon as reasonably practicable, take any steps he/she considers appropriate to establish the facts in relation to the complaint.

Once all the facts have been established, the headteacher or governor (as applicable) will produce a written response to all parties involved. This will be done within 15 school days.

### Stage 3 – Complain to the School Governing Body

If the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2, you should write to the Chair of the Governing Body using the Complaint Form Stage 3 (see attached below). Copies of all previous letters etc relating to the complaint should be included.

When the Chair receives a complaint, efforts will be made to resolve this informally. If however, this route is unsuccessful or the Chair considers it to be inadvisable, the Chair will convene a Governing Body Complaints Panel. The Complaints Panel will be formed of three governors who have had no prior involvement in the complaint.

The Governing Body Complaints Panel will meet with you to hear the details of your complaint. You may bring a friend to the meeting if you wish. The Governing Body Complaints Panel will also meet (either at the same time or separately) with the headteacher and any others involved in the complaint. The meeting(s) will happen within 15 school days of the complaint being received by the Chair of the Governing Body.

Following the meeting, the panel will reply to you within 15 school days of the meeting taking place, stating:

- whether the panel uphold the complaint, in full or in part;
- the redress the panel is recommending, if any; and
- the reasons for their decision.

The complaints procedure does not include a further appeal to the Local Authority, but complainants who remain unsatisfied with the outcome may refer the complaint to the Secretary of State for Education.

### Withdrawal of a complaint

If the complainant wishes to withdraw their complaint, they will be asked to confirm this in writing.

### Complaints about a governor, the Chair of Governors or the Governing Body

Complaints about a governor should be referred to the Chair of Governors who will investigate and respond to the complainant. Any appeal against the Chair's response would be dealt with by the Governing Body Complaints Panel.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors must be referred to the Clerk to Governors who would arrange for the complaint to be considered by the Governing Body Complaints Panel.

This complaints procedure sets out how to make a complaint and the timescales within which the school will aim to respond. It is the school's intention to deal with all complaints as quickly and smoothly as possible. However, there will be circumstances in which it is not possible to observe the timescales set out in this procedure. In those circumstances the school will keep you informed of any revised timescales and the reasons for any delay.

The table below summarises the procedure:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Time-limit for School's response</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>	Discuss complaint with class teacher / relevant member of staff	As soon as possible but no later than 5 school days after any relevant facts have been established.
<b>Stage 2</b>	Complain to headteacher (or Chair of Governors if complaint is about the headteacher)	As soon as possible but no later than 15 school days after any relevant facts have been established.
<b>Stage 3</b>	Complain to the School Governing Body	Meeting(s) set up within 15 school days. Decision within 15 school days of the meeting.

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Written records will be kept of all complaints – formal and informal – including whether they are resolved at a preliminary stage or a hearing. The correspondence and records of complaints are to be kept confidential except where a body conducting an inspection under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 or Secretary of State requests access to the records or other documents involved in the complaint.

## Stage 2 Complaints Form – St Mary’s CE Primary School

**Stage 2 - Complaints to the Headteacher:** If you feel you have been unable to resolve your complaint through speaking to your child’s class teacher or other appropriate member of staff and wish to take the matter further, please complete this form and send it to the Headteacher. If your complaint is against the Headteacher you will need to send the form to the Chair of the Governing Body; this can be done via the school office. If you have any issues with completing the form, please discuss your complaint with the school office and they will record the complaint for you and give you a copy for your records.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Home): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Day): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Mobile): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth of Child \_\_\_\_\_

What are the details of your complaint?

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*

When did you discuss your concern/complaint with the appropriate member of staff?

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*

What was the result of the discussion?

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Stage 3 Complaints Form – St Mary’s CE Primary School

**Stage 3 Complaints to the School Governing Body:** If you continue to feel your complaint is unresolved, you may take your complain to the School Governing Body. You must have gone through Stage 1 (Complaint to Class Teacher) and Stage 2 (Complaint to Head Teacher) as appropriate, prior to completing a Stage 3 complaint form.

Please fill in this form and send it to the Chair of Governors, via the School Office. If you have any issues with completing the form, please discuss your complaint with the school office and they will record the complaint for you and give you a copy for your records.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Home): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Day): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Mobile): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth of Child \_\_\_\_\_

What are the details of your complaint and how have they been dealt with in Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Complaints process.

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*



What was the result of outcomes of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*

Is there any further information you would like to provide the Governing Body about your Complaint that will help in investigating the matter fully.

*Continue on a separate sheet as necessary*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_