



**Holy Family Catholic Primary School
Complaints Policy**



Committee Responsible for Reviewing this Policy:
Curriculum and Standards

Member of Staff Responsible for this Policy:
E Allonby

Date of last Review:
February 2023

Mission Statement

Holy Family School aims to develop our children's all round potential in a happy, secure and disciplined environment. To achieve this, we are committed to a partnership of parents, carers, staff, governors and the parish. Our school is founded on faith in Jesus Christ and his teachings and we accept the guidance of the Catholic Church in establishing that foundation.

In all things love.



Introduction:

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils, are concerns rather than complaints. Holy Family School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, you may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one year of the incident occurring. After this time it would be difficult to establish the facts.

The prime aim of Holy Family School's policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible in the interest of all children's safety and well-being. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

At Holy Family School the Head Teacher will be responsible for the operation of the school complaints procedure unless the complaint concerns the Head Teacher. If the complaint concerns the Head Teacher then the Chair of the Governing Body will take responsibility for the operation of the school complaints procedure.

The following details outline the stages that can be used to resolve complaints.

Holy Family School Policy has five main stages.

In summary they are as follows: -

- Stage 1 –Raising a Concern- A concern is raised informally with a staff member. This is dealt with informally and acceptable to all involved parties.
- Stage 2 – Formal Complaints need to be sent in writing to the Head Teacher, Mrs E Allonby. Complaints against the Head Teacher need to be sent to the Chair of Governors, Mr I Hunter c/o Holy Family Catholic Primary School.
- Stage 3 – Complaint is heard by the Governing Body Complaints Panel
- Stage 4 – Further recourse for Complainants - Local Education Authority
- Stage 5 - Further recourse for Complainants-Secretary of State for Education and/or local Government Ombudsman

Stage 1 – Raising a concern

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents make their first contact to the child's Class Teacher or Learning Mentor.

On some occasions the concern raised may require investigation, or discussion with others, in which case parents will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. Parents need to be aware that all concerns are taken seriously but appointments may only be available outside teaching hours.

If you are not satisfied with the result at this stage, please make an appointment to see the head of EYFS, Mrs Unsworth, Key Stage 1, Mrs S Whitehead or Key Stage 2, Mr Waywell. The Key Stage Manager will work with parents to sort out a satisfactory outcome for all parties.

If parents are not happy with the outcome at this stage the Key Stage Manager will make parents aware of the school Complaints Policy.

Stage 2 Formal complaint - heard by the Head Teacher

On the rare occasions that concerns cannot be dealt with to the satisfaction of parents, formal procedures can be followed. Formal complaints need to be put in writing and addressed to the Head Teacher, Mrs E Allonby. Letters need to give a full explanation of the complaint and address the steps already taken to resolve the concern informally. If possible, the complainant should try to give an indication of the outcome they would like to resolve their concern.

The complaint will be logged, including the date it was received. At this point, the complaint is seen as a 'Formal Complaint' and all documentation sent to the complainant will be sent by recorded delivery or signed for by the complainant.

The school will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as possible but within 5 school working days of receiving it.

Investigating Complaints

The Head Teacher will investigate the formal complaint following the guidelines below:

- establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved;
- meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary);
- clarify what the complainant feels would put things right in the best interests of all

children concerned

- interview those involved where necessary
- conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- all meetings/interviews at this stage to be minuted

Resolving Complaints

The aim of the investigation will be to resolve the complaint (keeping the children's best interests at the centre of the resolution) and the outcome may lead to one or more of the following.

- an apology;
- an explanation;
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint if necessary

The aim will be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible and WITHIN 15 WORKING SCHOOL DAYS of receiving the written complaint. If a time extension is necessary the complainant will be notified in writing of the reasons why and the length of the extension period. The Head Teacher will invite the complainant into school and provide a written outcome of the investigation. The complainant may be accompanied by one other person.

Stage 3 Formal complaint - heard by the Governing Body Complaints Committee

If following an investigation a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome they will have the right to make an appeal that will be heard by a committee of the governing body comprising of three members who have had no previous involvement with the complaint. The aim of the Governing Body Complaints Committee is to investigate that correct procedures have been followed according to the school's Complaints Policy

A letter requesting a Stage 3 hearing by the Governing Body Complaints Committee needs to be sent c/o Holy Family School within 5 days of the complainant receiving a Stage 2 outcome, listing the grounds for the complainants appeal. A meeting will be convened to which the complainant and the Head Teacher will be invited.

At the hearing the Head Teacher will be asked to present the findings of his/her investigation. The complainant will list their points of appeal to illustrate where procedures have not been

followed. They will then have the opportunity to explain why they were not satisfied with the outcomes and say what they would like to happen to resolve the issue.

The committee will adjourn to consider the appeal and an outcome will be sent in writing to the Head Teacher and complainant within 5 working school days.

Any complaint against the Head Teacher will be investigated and presented by the Chair of Governors. If the chair is unable to carry out the investigation and hearing, then he/she can delegate the role to an LEA adviser, Vice Chair or another governor.

The Governors appeal hearing (Stage 3) is the last school-based stage of the complaints process.

Stage 4/5 Further recourse for Complainants

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the governing body's handling of their complaint, further recourse to other agencies is available by contacting the Local Education Authority and then the Secretary of State for Education and/or local Government Ombudsman.