

ST ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE GUIDANCE



Our Vision

At St Andrew's CE Primary School, we aim to bring children to a place where they can realise their full potential. Our Christian values are the foundation of all we do and each one is a facet of the central value, love, which '*always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*' (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Our vision is central to the life and ethos of the school. It shapes our approach to others and what we do on a daily basis.

The difference between a concern and a complaint.

A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. St Andrew's CE Primary School takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, the Headteacher, will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, the Headteacher will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important. We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, St Andrew's Primary School will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

A Parents' Guide

St Andrew's CE Primary School recognises that at times things can go wrong. This guidance will help you understand how to resolve concerns you may have about your child's education.

The school has procedures for dealing with concerns or complaints and we value any feedback about our services, including compliments and suggestions.

The school's Governing Body has overall responsibility for the school and for ensuring the well-being of pupils and that all pupils receive an appropriate and high standard of education. The Headteacher is responsible for making decisions on a daily basis about the school's internal management and organisation.

You should contact the school if you are concerned about an issue such as:

- Your child's academic progress
- Special educational needs provision
- Your child's welfare
- Something that has happened in school

How do I raise a concern or complain to the school?

First, we ask you to speak to the relevant member of staff as soon as you have a concern. This will normally be the class teacher. This informal approach is nearly always the quickest and most effective way of resolving your concerns. Please give the member of staff time to action and implement your request. If it does not resolve the concern, another approach may be required.

If you then feel that your concern has not been resolved, then it is important to speak to or write to the Headteacher, who will look into your concern and respond to you.

If you are unhappy with the Headteacher's response, you should write with your complaint to the Chair of Governors at the school address. Mark your envelope/email. '*For Immediate Attention*'. This will trigger our official complaints process, which is detailed below.

In line with equality legislation, we will consider making reasonable adjustments where necessary to help complainants access and complete this complaints procedure. This may include, for example, providing information in alternative formats, supporting complainants in submitting a formal complaint, or arranging meetings in accessible locations.

Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

This is how your complaint will be handled

Within **3 working days** of receiving the written complaint, you will receive an acknowledgement of your complaint from the school office. Please ensure you include a return email address in your letter or email to enable the office to reply to you.

Within **7 working days** of receiving the written complaint, the Chair will review your complaint and consider an appropriate course of action. This may include discussing your complaint with the Headteacher or an appropriate senior member of staff.

The Chair may propose a meeting to explore the circumstances of your complaint in more detail and will seek to arrange that meeting at the earliest mutual convenience. If that timescale is not possible, you will be informed of the reason.

The Chair will formally reply to your complaint in writing.

If mediation is not deemed appropriate or if it is not successful, the Chair of Governors or Clerk will set up a panel of governors to meet within a further **15 working days** to consider your complaint. The Clerk will provide details of the hearing and will request any further information you may wish to provide.

The complaints panel will consist of **three governors**. The panel will be supported by a Clerk, who is not a member of staff, and who will take notes during the hearing. The Clerk will remain with the panel while they make their decision in case governors need clarification about responses to particular questions.

The panel will hear the complaint impartially and make their decision without fear or favour.

Five working days before the hearing, the Clerk will send copies of all papers submitted by both sides to you, the Headteacher and the three panel members, so that there is sufficient time to read the evidence before the hearing.

At the hearing

1. You and the Headteacher will be invited into the room at the same time.
2. After introductions, you will be invited to explain your complaint.
3. The Headteacher may question you.
4. The panel will question you.
5. The Headteacher will be invited to explain the school's actions.
6. You may question the Headteacher.
7. The panel will question the Headteacher.
8. The panel may ask additional questions of any party at any point.
9. You will then be invited to sum up your complaint.
10. The Headteacher will then be invited to sum up the school's actions and response.

11. The Chair will explain that you and the Headteacher will hear from the panel within seven working days.
12. Both you and the Headteacher will leave together while the panel considers the issues.
13. The Clerk will remain with the panel.

Can I take my complaint further?

For most complaints, you cannot take your complaint to the Local Authority. The Local Authority cannot investigate school matters on a parent’s behalf, nor can it review how the school has dealt with your complaint.

However, if you feel that the school has acted unreasonably or not followed the correct procedures, you can write to the Secretary of State for Schools.

Complaints from other parties (non-parents or carers)

While the above policy explicitly applies to parents and carers and concerns about their child(ren), we understand there may be occasions where concerns come from other sources. In such cases, we ask that the concern is addressed in the first instance to the Headteacher, Mrs Annette Mashru, who will consider, respond or escalate as appropriate.

(Signed)

Chair of Governors

March 2026

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