

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
A Catholic Voluntary Academy
Complaints Policy
Date of next review- Autumn 2019

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

In our Catholic School we provide a:

- S**afe, loving and enriching environment
- T**rust, and patience
- M**otivation to reach individual's full potential
- A**cceptance and celebration of uniqueness
- R**espect for all
- Y**oung people nurtured in the Spirit of God.
- S**chool full of awe and wonder

St. Mary's School is a Rights Respecting School and as such the needs and well being of our children are at the heart of all policies in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 28

You have the right to a good quality education



Introduction

As in any organisation or community, misunderstandings can from time to time arise which may lead to a parent wishing to express some concern. A concern is not a complaint and should not be treated as such by the parent or school. Only a very small number of concerns raised by parents need to be investigated using the formal procedure. **Any concern should always be raised with the Headteacher in the first instance where every effort should be made to resolve the difficulty.** When concerns are addressed and resolved there should be no need for a formal complaint.

An initial request for action or an enquiry is not a complaint. However, failure to respond could give rise to a complaint.

Aims

This procedure explains what parents can do if a query or concern that has been raised with the Headteacher and has not been responded to in a manner that satisfies the parent.

A number of other procedures already exist. There are special arrangements for dealing with the following matters which must not be dealt with under the complaints procedure.

The existing special arrangements are for dealing with:

- Complaints about what your child is taught at school (the National Curriculum), the school's charging policy, religious education and collective worship, and the school's provision of information.
(The school's prospectus will give you details of the arrangements. In each case, however, you should first discuss the problem with the Headteacher.)
- Appeals against decisions about your child's special educational needs.
(A Tribunal has been established to deal with complaints of this nature. The school or Local Authority will be able to give you details.)
- If you are not offered a place in the school of your choice, or if your child is suspended or excluded from school.
(The school will tell you how to appeal if these situations arise.)
- If you think your child has been given an incorrect grade in a public examination.
(You can ask the school to question the result with the examinations board.)

In all other cases you should follow the procedures outlined in this document.

FIRST – THE STAFF

If you are worried about something concerning your child at school you should first ask to discuss the difficulty with your child's teacher. You can do this by phoning the school, writing a letter or making an appointment to meet.

It may be suggested to you by your child's teacher that it would be more appropriate for you to talk with another senior member of staff, in which case you should do this.

If, however, having spoken with a teacher or, for example, the Deputy Head, you are still dissatisfied you should then meet the Headteacher.

SECOND – THE HEADTEACHER

First arrange a meeting with the headteacher. After the meeting the headteacher will gather as much evidence and information as possible and try to resolve the situation, arranging further meetings as deemed necessary without undue delay.

Most complaints will have been resolved by this stage but, if you are still unhappy, the next step is a formal complaint to the Governing Body.

THIRD - THE GOVERNORS

You should now put the complaint in writing. You can use the form at the back of this document or you can write a letter instead if you prefer. If this is difficult ask a friend to help.

Send the completed form, or your letter, to the Chair of Governors at the school. Try to keep a copy of the form or letter, it may help you later. The governors will let you know who will investigate your complaint and how they will deal with it.

Normally about three governors will be involved. They will hold a meeting to discuss your complaint. The meeting will usually be held within 20 days of the day the Chairman receives your form or letter.

You will be invited to go to the meeting so that you can talk about your complaint in more detail. You can take a friend or representative with you if you wish. You will be given at least 3 day's notice of the meeting. Every effort will be made to see that the date and time is convenient for you.

After the meeting, even if you have attended, the governors will write to you and tell you the result. This will tell you of any action taken or to be taken.

FOURTH - THE DIOCESE

If you are still dissatisfied, or if you do not feel you can complain to the headteacher or the governors, you can ask the Diocese to carry out an investigation.

You should write to:

The Schools' Adviser
The Hallam Pastoral Centre
St Charles' Street
Sheffield
S9 3WU

It will help if you can enclose your original complaint form or letter and any other papers.

The Schools' Adviser will appoint someone to investigate your complaint. It will not be a person who has a connection with the school as, for example, a governor or teacher.

The complaint will normally be investigated within 20 school days. The person appointed to carry out the investigation will arrange to meet with you. You will be

given at least 3 day's notice of the meeting and you can take a friend or representative with you.

The Diocesan representative will eventually write to you to tell you the result of the investigation. The Diocese may then make recommendations to the governors.

The Secretary of State

If you are still not happy you can address your complaint to:

The Secretary of State,
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings,
Great Smith Street,
LONDON
SW1P 3BT

You should put your complaint in writing and enclose copies of your original complaint and any other relevant papers.

FORM OF COMPLAINT

When you have filled in this form, take it or send it to the Chair of the Governing Body of your Child's school. (Name and address are available from the school secretary.)

Please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

1. **Name** _____

2. **Address** _____

3. **Telephone number: at home:** _____ **at work:** _____

(If you do not have a telephone but can be contacted through a friend or neighbour please give their name and telephone number)

4. **Name of school** _____

5. **Brief details of the problem** _____

6. **To what date or period of time does your complaint relate?** _____

7. **To whom have you already complained informally and when?** _____

8. **Please give details of any more information you have to back up your complaint, such as letters or reports. If you cannot send photocopies, please send your original paper, which will be photocopied and returned to you.**

9. **Do you have a solution that you wish to suggest?** _____

Signed _____

Date _____