



Our Lady of Pity R.C. Primary School - A Voluntary Academy

Complaints Procedures

(Reviewed and ratified by the Full Governing Body April 20th 2016)

Complaints Procedure

Aim:

The school's aim is to set out a procedure in relation to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 for resolving parental concerns and complaints in that it:

- encourages resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- is easily accessible and publicised;
- is simple to understand and use;
- is impartial;
- is non-adversarial;
- allows swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensures a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary;
- respects people's desire for confidentiality;
- addresses all the points at issue and provides an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary; and
- provides information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Raising Concerns

1. Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the member of staff concerned so that they can be resolved as quickly and informally as possible.
2. The normal school standard will be that members of staff aim to make an initial response to concerns raised by parents within 24 hours. Where this does not prove possible, an explanation will be given for any delay.
3. Members of staff dealing with concerns should record any concerns raised and the steps taken to deal with them. Unless it is clear that the parent is completely satisfied, they should be given a copy of the written complaints procedure which includes a form for making written complaints. Such document is available on the school website.

Formal Complaints

1. Within five working days of receipt of a written formal complaint, the Clerk to the Governors will write to the parent making the complaint and explain how and by whom the complaint is to be investigated. The first stage of a formal complaint is for the parent to meet with the Assistant Principal or the Head of School. If the complaint concerns the conduct of the Assistant Principal or the Head of School, the complaint will be heard by the Principal. If the complaint concerns the conduct of the Principal, the complaint will be heard by the Chair of Governors.

2. The person hearing the complaint will seek to:

- 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 to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keep notes of all interviews undertaken.

3. The person hearing the complaint will be responsible for ensuring that a written report of their findings is made to the complainant and that a full record of any investigation, including the original written complaint and the written report is kept on file. This record is confidential to the parent, the members of staff involved in the investigation of the complaint and the Principal.

4. The letter reporting the outcome of the hearing of the complaint will explain that, if the parent does not feel that the matter has been resolved at stage one, a further meeting (stage two) will be arranged with the Principal. Following stage two, if the parent feels that the matter has still not been resolved, the Principal will write to the parent outlining a report of Principal's finding and the right to appeal. Such a letter must incorporate the contact details of the person(s) to whom the appeal should be addressed and this person(s) must not have been involved in dealing with the complaint. The letter should ask parents to indicate within five working days whether or not they wish to appeal.

The Appeal Panel (Complaints Committee)

1. If a parent indicates in writing that he/she wishes to appeal against the outcome of the investigation into their complaint, the Clerk to the Governors will convene such a meeting within fifteen working days of receipt of written indication of the intention to appeal.
2. Should the appeal be heard by members of the Governors' Appeal Panel, such a panel will normally consist of three panel members. One of these panel members must be someone independent of the management and running of the school and the other two (or more) must be members of the Governing Body.
3. The Governors' Appeal panel will be chaired by a member of the Governing Body.
4. The Governors' Appeal Panel will be clerked by the Clerk to the Governing Body.

5. The Clerk to the Governors' Appeal Panel will write to the parent giving at least ten days notice of the date and time of the meeting of the Appeal Panel and advising them of their right to attend and to be accompanied if they wish.
6. The letter giving notice of the Governors' Appeal Panel meeting will also include copies of any documents necessary to understand the outcome of the investigation into the original complaint. Such documents may be edited to avoid identifying any students involved.
7. At the meeting of the Governors' Appeal Panel, the person who investigated the original complaint will outline the process of the investigation and explain the outcome. At the end of this explanation, the parent will be invited to ask any questions. The parent will then be asked to add any comments of their own and, in particular to explain what they would like to be done in response to their complaint.
8. After the person who investigated the original complaint and the parent have spoken and answered any questions put to them by members of the panel, they will withdraw and the panel will consider its decision.
9. The panel will consider whether or not they are satisfied with the outcome of the original investigation. If they are satisfied that the outcome was wholly reasonable, the Chair will write to the parent explaining the panel's decision. A copy of this letter will also be sent to the member of staff about whom the original complaint was made (if appropriate). If they decide that there are flaws in the way the investigation was conducted or in the outcome, they will set out their findings and consider whether or not it is appropriate to offer one or more of the following:
 - an apology;
 - an explanation;
 - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
 - an assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
 - 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.
10. The Clerk to the Governors' Appeal Panel will ensure that a full record of the panel meeting, including copies of all the papers, is stored at the school. All these records are confidential to the parent, the panel members and the members of staff involved in the original complaint and its investigation.

Monitoring Complaints

1. The Principal will report on the operation of the Complaints Procedure to the Governing Body once a year. This report will include:
 - the number of formal complaints that have been made
 - the number that have been satisfactorily dealt with at the point of the original investigation
 - the number of occasions on which the Appeal Panel has met
 - any significant amendments to school policy or practice as a result of the complaints made
 - any issues that have arisen in the operation of the Complaints Procedure.
2. The Principal's report will respect the confidentiality of the individual.
3. In the light of the Principal's report, the Governing Body will consider whether or not the complaints procedure should be amended in any way.

Formal Complaint Form

Please complete and return to Mrs Julie English, Clerk to the Governing Body. who will acknowledge receipt and explain how your formal complaint will be investigated.

Your name:	
Student's name:	Tutor group:
Your relationship to the student:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Day time telephone number:	Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint:	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?	

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

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

For official use only

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Further action taken:

Complaint referred to:

Date: