

Procedure

Complaints

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Our Purpose

The work of the school is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of each pupil. It seeks to put Christ at the centre of every activity, worship, learning and service to others.

This procedure was adopted by the Governing Body

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Lavery', written over a horizontal line.

Mr R Lavery, Chair of Governing Body

Date:

7/12/2011

SCHOOL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

St Mary's school is committed to resolving parental / carers' concerns quickly and efficiently, within a realistic time scale, leading to mutually agreed reconciliation. The school complaints procedure comprises three stages (see summary flowchart - Appendix A). The majority of complaints are resolved satisfactorily at the informal stage. However, it may sometimes be necessary to take complaints through formal stages. At every stage, outcomes are recorded and complete confidentiality is upheld. The outcomes of complaints are monitored and reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body as part of ongoing review of school improvement.

STAGE 1 – INFORMAL

- Parents / Carers should feel free to raise their concerns directly with the most appropriate member of staff, usually Faculty Leaders or Student Progress Leaders, by telephone or via email to smt@stmarys.co.uk. If it is unclear who the most appropriate member of staff would be Parents / Carers are asked to contact Mrs Tindall, PA to the Senior Management Team, who acts as Complaints Co-ordinator, for guidance.
- The school aims to respond to the Complainant within 3 school days. If it is not possible to meet this timescale the complainant will be informed of when a response will be made.
- In most cases, the complainant will be invited into school to meet the most appropriate member of staff where a resolution will be agreed.
- If, after attempting to resolve the issue informally, a complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome the complaint will be passed to the Headteacher (**Stage 2**).

Exceptions

- Complaints which involve an allegation of misconduct about a member of staff should be made in writing to Mr R Pritchard, Headteacher, and will be dealt with under Stage 2 below.
- A complaint about the conduct of the Headteacher should be made in writing to Mr R Lavery, Chair of Governors c/o the school. Any such complaint will be dealt with according to this policy, but taken directly to Stage 2. The role outlined for the Headteacher will be taken by the Chair of Governors. The complainant will be advised that should they be dissatisfied with the outcome, they may refer the matter to the Governing Body (Stage 3).

STAGE 2 – FORMAL – HEADTEACHER

- The Headteacher will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 school days.
- The Headteacher will inform the complainant of the process that will be put in place to investigate the complaint further.
- The Headteacher may decide to nominate a senior member of staff, who is impartial and has had no prior involvement with the issue, to investigate the matter further (Investigating Officer).
- The complainant will be given the opportunity to meet the Headteacher, or Investigating Officer if appointed, to state their case. Other witnesses may also be interviewed. A written record of all meetings and telephone conversations will be kept.
- The Headteacher will make every effort to provide a full written response to the Complainant within 10 working days. However, should this timescale need to be extended, the Complainant will be informed. Should it be required, a further meeting to discuss outcomes with the Complainant may take place.
- The Complaints Co-ordinator will keep a record of the outcome.

- The Complainant will be advised that should they be dissatisfied with the outcome they may refer the matter to the Chair of Governors (**Stage 3**).

STAGE 3 – FORMAL – APPEAL TO CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

- Appeals should be lodged in writing to the Chair of Governors within 10 schools days of receipt of the Stage 2 decision from the Headteacher.
- A panel of 3 impartial Governors will be established to hear the appeal, reconcile differences and provide a fair resolution. The panel will have the opportunity to read all relevant documentation prior to the date of the hearing.
- The panel will convene within 20 schools days of receiving the complaint. The Complaints Co-ordinator will inform the Complainant, the Headteacher and the Investigating Officer (if applicable) of the date, time and venue of the hearing and will forward all relevant documentation to all parties involved. The Complainant may be accompanied by a friend or relative should they require support.
- The remit of the panel will be explained to all parties and each will have the opportunity in turn to state their case and ask questions.
- The Complaints Co-ordinator will minute the hearing.
- The panel's final decision will be communicated in writing to the Complainant and the Headteacher within 3 school days.
- If the Complainant believes that the matter has not been dealt with fairly he/she can request that a 2nd panel of 3 different Governors examines the process which has been followed.
- The 2nd panel will not have the power to change the decision of the 1st panel, but may comment on the fairness of the process.
- Should the Complainant continue to be dissatisfied a further stage of appeal can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education, but only on the grounds that the Governing Body is acting or proposing to act illegally.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FLOWCHART

