

The Federation of St John's & St Paul's Whitechapel CE Primary Schools

COMPLAINTS POLICY

From time to time parents, carers, and others connected with the school, will become aware of matters which cause them concern. To encourage resolution of such situations the Governing Body has adopted a complaints procedure. This is in line with the guidelines produced by the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

Principles

The procedure is devised with the intention that it will:

- Usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- Be simple to use and understand;
- Be non-adversarial;
- Treat complaints confidentially;
- Allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- Address all points at issue;
- Inform future practice so that the problem is unlikely to reoccur;
- Reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as they work together for the good of the pupils in the school;
- Make clear the times set aside daily/weekly when staff are available for discussion with parents;
- Ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil would never be affected by a parental complaint;
- Discourage anonymous complaints;
- Actively encourage strong home-school links;
- Ensure that all staff have opportunities to discuss and understand the school's response to concerns and complaints made by parents;
- Ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the complaint;
- Regularly review its system for monitoring concerns and complaints received from parents.

Procedures

What to do if you have a concern

If you have a concern we would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to deal with it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Whatever your concern, please know that we will treat it as being strictly confidential.

Be assured that no matter what you want to share with us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please do not delay telling us of your concern. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which is more than a day or two old.

After hearing your concern, we will act as quickly as we can. Please allow time for any action we take to be effective.

Stage 1

What to do first

Please contact your child's class teacher and arrange a time when you can discuss your concern. It may be possible for you to see the teacher straight away but usually it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through.

What to do next

If you are still unhappy, ask for an appointment with the Head of School (HoS) or Executive Headteacher (EHT). It is helpful if you can give a brief outline of your concern when you make the appointment. Alternatively, you may want to write directly to the EHT outlining your concerns. After your discussion with the HoS or EHT, or following receipt of your letter, you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible; you will receive a written response within 10 school days. The problem will

normally be resolved at this point.

Stage 2:

If you are still unhappy

If you are still not satisfied, you may arrange for a further investigation by writing to the Chair of the Governing Body. This should be acknowledged within 2 school days stating the matter is being investigated and that you should receive a further response within 10 school days. The Chair of the Governing Body will probably discuss the matter with the EHT and may arrange for a further investigation.

The investigation process

- There should be a clear understanding of the complaint; clarification should be sought if necessary.
- Interviews should be held as soon as possible.
- Strict attention will be paid to confidentiality.
- Separate discussions will be held with parties involved and any witnesses.
- Written notes and statements will be kept if necessary.
- Pupils will only be interviewed in exceptional circumstances.

Following the investigation the Chair will write to you with a summary of his findings and what he has decided to do in response to your complaint.

Stage 3

Further Action

Finally, if the complaint still has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may ask for your complaint to be heard by the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body. The Complaints Committee will listen to you, to the EHT and to any others involved and come to a decision.

Complaints Committee Hearing

- The Clerk of the Governing Body should set up a meeting within 20 school days giving at least 10 days' notice of the meeting to relevant parties.
- The hearing for the Complaints Committee should be as informal as possible. The Governing Body Chair and the EHT may be present.
- The Governing Body Clerk, or another person appointed by the Chair, should be present throughout the hearing and after the parties have withdrawn, in order to take notes.
- The decision and recommendations of the Complaints Committee will be notified in writing as soon as possible to all parties. This should normally be within 5 school days.
- The decision of the Governing Body Complaints Committee is final.