



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

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Complaints Policy

This policy should be taken as part of St. John's C. of E. First School's overall strategy and is implemented within the context of our vision of Government aims and our values as a Church of England School.

Rationale

St John's CE VA First School is committed to providing a high quality education for its pupils. The school's values are based on Christian principles of respect for the individual and of fairness and justice for all members of the school community.

At St John's School we believe that:

- pupils learn best if there is an effective partnership between school and parents
- all members of the school community are entitled to have their points of view heard
- unresolved complaints can result in unhealthy conflict
- complaints should be handled with high regard to confidentiality
- it is vital that there should never be any victimisation of a pupil as a result of a parental complaint

Aims

The aims of this policy are

- To reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as they work together for the good of the pupils in the school
- To ensure that it is easy for parents to inform staff and governors of any concerns they may have
- To ensure that staff and governors respond positively and quickly and in confidence to complaints from parents and carers

This procedure has two stages, informal and formal.



Stage 1: Informal

Most concerns are dealt with informally at our school. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss issues or worries with their child's class teacher.

If a parent/carer is still worried, s/he may ask to meet with the headteacher. Appointments can usually be made within 24 hours.

The headteacher will discuss the concern with the parent/carer, listening to their point of view and outlining how the school sees the situation. The discussion will focus on finding ways of resolving the situation.

If there is a need for the headteacher to investigate further she will agree a timescale for responding to the parent.

The headteacher will write to the parent, outlining any investigation and giving details of any action to be taken (if appropriate).

If the concern is about the headteacher, the parent/carer should make an appointment to meet with the chair of governors, who will follow the above procedure.

Stage 2: Formal

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the headteacher's decision (or the decision of the chair of governors if the complaint is about the headteacher) s/he may write to the clerk to the governors to ask for the matter to be referred to the governing body's complaints committee. S/he should do this within 5 days of receipt of the headteacher's letter.

The complaints committee is a panel of three governors who have not already been involved with the complaint. The committee will normally meet within 15 days of receiving the complaint, to consider the complaint, the head's report of the investigation and the evidence of any witnesses. The committee reaches a decision and may make recommendations.

The complainant is informed of the decision and any recommendations of the committee within 5 days of the meeting. The committee's decision is final.

Time-Limits

Complaints need to be considered, and resolved, as quickly and efficiently as possible with the expectation being that complaints will be made as soon as possible after the incident arises but no later than 3 months (although the school will consider exceptions). The complainant will be informed about the expected timescales associated with dealing with the complaint within each stage. Where further investigations are necessary, the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline and an explanation for the delay.

Finally

If the complainant, once the school complaints procedure is completed, remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaints procedure they have the right to contact the Secretary of State. Complainants will need to be advised to write to the School Complaints Unit (SCU) at the DfE, 2nd floor, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD.

The DfE will make sure that the complainant has exhausted all the local procedures and will then examine if the complaints policy and any other relevant policies were followed. The department does not re-investigate the substance of the complaint. If breaches of policy or legislation are found the SCU will report them back to the school for action to be taken.



***The governors' complaints committee**

The clerk to the committee should give at least 7 days notice of the meeting to:- the members of the committee, complainant, headteacher and chair of governing body sending them the following:-

- An invitation to attend the meeting
- Details of date, time and place of meeting
- A request for copies of any written papers which people may wish to consider to be sent to him/her by 5 days before the meeting so that they can be distributed to the committee and the other parties
- A request of the names of any witnesses who may be called
- A statement saying that the complainant may wish to be accompanied by a friend and asking for the name of that friend
- Where appropriate an enquiry as to whether it would be helpful for an interpreter to be available
- An enquiry as to whether access should be provided for the disabled

At the meeting

Both parties are invited to explain their case. The complainant's desired outcome and any possibilities of redress are discussed. An attempt is made to resolve the complaint, if possible to the satisfaction of the complainant. After the complainant, the Chair and the headteacher have withdrawn, the committee decides on its recommendations

This policy was agreed by the governing board in the Summer Term 2016 and will be reviewed during the Summer term 2018

SignedChair of Governors

Date

