St Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Concerns and Complaints Procedure Summary

Our family at St Joseph's Learns, Loves and Grows with God at the centre

Reviewed	Spring Term 2020
Next Revision	3 yearly
To be reviewed	Spring Term 2023

School Stages

INFORMAL STAGE

You have a CONCERN or COMPLAINT – make in person, writing or telephone to the school.

Ideally speak directly with the member of staff concerned (the school can make arrangements for another member of staff to deal with your concern or complaint if necessary).

Make it clear what you would see as a satisfactory outcome.

Most concerns and complaints are resolved at this stage.

FORMAL COMPLAINT - STAGE 1

If you are not happy with how the school has treated your concern or complaint and you want to take it further, you can make a FORMAL COMPLAINT. You need to do this within three months of the (last) incident.

Ideally make your complaint in writing using the Template Complaint Form - the school can support you with that. Or you can make it in person or telephone via the school office – they will complete the form for you - you will need to agree to the wording they use.

Do not approach an individual governor as they have no power to act on an individual basis and it may prevent them from considering a complaint at Stage 2 of the procedure.

You will need to address your complaint to different people, depending on the subject of your complaint:

- Address a complaint about a member of staff to the Head of School / Executive Headteacher
- Address a complaint about the Head of School / Executive Headteacher, the chair of governors, any individual governor or governors or the whole governing board to the clerk to governors

Please note that for some issues, such as admissions and exclusions, you need to follow different procedures – see Appendix D.

What happens next:

Complaint against member of staff	Complaint against Head of School / Executive Headteacher	Complaint against one governor	Complaint against more governors
Head of School / Executive Headteacher investigates	Suitably qualified governor/independent investigator investigates	Suitably qualified governor/independent investigator investigates	Independent investigator investigates

You should receive a formal written response within 15 school days of receipt of your complaint. You may be invited to a meeting with the Head of School / Executive Headteacher/investigator during the investigation and/or to discuss the findings. The aim is to reach reconciliation/a satisfactory outcome for you.

If you not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, you can ask for your complaint to go to Stage 2 – see overleaf.

	FORMAL COMPLAINT - STAGE 2
	Write to the school office within 20 days of receiving the written outcome of Stage 1– addressed to the Clerk to Governors – asking for your complaint to go to Stage 2.
	Governors' Complaints Committee The clerk then organises a committee of governors (usually three) who have no prior involvement in the complaint, if necessary governors from another school. The committee will usually meet for a **hearing** to which you will be invited. You can opt for the committee to have a **meeting** at which they just consider written submissions. In exceptional circumstances the committee may decide to do this if they consider there has already been a thorough investigation and a hearing will not produce new evidence. The hearing or meeting should be held <u>within 20 school days</u> of receipt of Stage 2 request.
	Governors' Complaints Hearing You (the complainant) can bring a friend/supporter (not usually a legal representative). Also the subject of the complaint (with a supporter) and the investigator from Stage 1 or their representative will also be invited to attend. The clerk will ask you and the subject of the complaint to send any further documents to them at least 10 days before the meeting. At the hearing all parties will present their case and they and the governors can question all parties – See Appendix C for how the hearing will be conducted. The aim is reconciliation.
	The outcome of the hearing will be to uphold or not, in part or in whole, the outcome of Stage 1. The chair of the committee will write to you within 5 school days to set out the decision of the committee and the reasons. If it is a very complex case this may take longer. **That will be the end of the school stages if a hearing has taken place.**
	<u>OR</u> Governors' Complaints Meeting (rather than Hearing) You, the subject of the complaint and the investigator will be invited to send further documents to the clerk. All parties will have sight of the documents before the meeting and be able to make comments to the clerk. The outcome of the meeting will be to: • uphold or not, in part or in whole, the outcome of Stage 1 – in which case the chair of the committee will write to you within 5 school days to set out the decision of the committee and the reasons – **that will be the end of the school stages** <u>OR</u> • adjourn the committee meeting until further investigation has taken place <u>OR</u> • decide that a **complaints hearing** is necessary, to which you and other key parties will be invited – see above for how that will happen.
	The clerk will send the draft minutes to all who attended the meeting/hearing <u>within 20 school days</u>. This is an opportunity to agree or challenge the minutes.
DfE Stage	If you are still not happy with the outcome of the complaints procedures you can write to the Department for Education in Manchester (see page 14 of the full procedures). Please note, the DfE will not normally reinvestigate your complaint. They will consider whether we (the school and governors) have complied with education legislation and any statutory policies relating to the complaint.