

ST. CHAD'S C.E.(C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

'Building together with Jesus for a better future.'

We are a Church of England School and our policies are written with a commitment to our Christian Character, which is rooted in the Bible.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the person of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Introduction

The main purpose of the complaints procedure is to solve problems and to give parents a means to raise issues of concern and have them addressed. Complainants will be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation.

All members of staff should be aware of the complaints procedure and understand:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints.
- The importance of treating complaints respectfully.
- The importance of treating parents with respect.

All parents should be aware of the complaints procedure and understand:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints.
- The importance of treating complaints respectfully.
- The importance of treating staff with respect.

Expressing Approval

When things go well, it is very helpful if parents express their approval. Maintenance of high levels of staff commitment, morale and motivation are essential to the provision of the best education for your child. Positive feedback really helps.

To express your approval, you can write, telephone, e-mail or speak personally to staff concerned or the headteacher. Your words will be appreciated.

Expressing Concerns

Our school is committed to providing a high quality service for your child. Sometimes things may seem to go wrong which may lead you to express concerns.

Any concerns should be raised with the member of staff concerned or the headteacher in the first instance. If the headteacher considers it appropriate another member of staff may be asked to respond because they have a particular responsibility or are familiar with the circumstances that have caused you concern. We hope that this informal stage would be sufficient to resolve the difficulty.

Making a Formal Complaint

If it has not been possible to resolve a difficulty informally, then parents can ask to use the formal complaints procedure.

- **Step 1 - the headteacher**

Having discussed their concerns parents may feel it necessary to inform the headteacher that they wish to make a formal complaint. They can do this by telephoning, writing a letter or arranging an appointment to meet with him/her.

It may be that the headteacher has not been aware of the concern raised prior to this point. At this stage the headteacher will consider whether the complainant can be satisfied without recourse to the governing body.

Action through a complaints procedure may lead to action being initiated under other procedures. This may be disciplinary or child protection procedures and consideration will be given to this possibility at the earliest stage. In these cases, the investigations under the complaints procedure will be suspended until action under the other procedures (including appeals) has been concluded. The complainant will be advised if this is the case and also informed of the likely delay in the final resolution of their complaint.

- **Step 2 - formal Complaint to the Governing Body**

If parents are dissatisfied with the response they can make a formal complaint to the governing body. School will provide a form that parents can choose to fill in for this purpose (Appendix 1).

The form will need to be sent to the Chair of Governors.

The school will record when the complaint is received. A complaint will then be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the Chair of the Governing Body. The acknowledgement will include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear about the progress of the investigation.

Details of a complaint will be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution.

The Chair of Governors will consider whether the investigation can be completed by the headteacher (who will already have been involved), the Chair him/herself, or whether to refer the complaint to a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body. If the latter course of action is followed the chair shall present a full report to the Committee.

This Committee will be made up of three governors. The membership will not include the headteacher and, according to the matter complained about, it may not be appropriate for certain categories of governor to be included.

The Committee will meet at a time convenient to the members of the Committee, the Chair (who will present the report), the parent (in order that they may make representations in person) and any witnesses.

Parents should not contact the Secretary of State for Education direct until Step 2 is complete.

Outcomes

In all cases where a complaint has been investigated the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- the complaint;
- the scope of the investigation;
- the conclusion of the investigation;
- any action which has resulted.

The Committee may wish to offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss the response.

If the investigation upholds the complaint, redress should be appropriate to the complaint and may include:

- An appropriate expression of regret.
- Providing the solution desired by the complaint.
- Changing the procedures to avoid future problems.

School will take responsibility for:

- Deciding who can take remedial action.
- Ensuring that the remedy is carried out.
- Ensuring that any remedy is within the school's powers.
- Ensuring the approach to remedies is reasonable and consistent.

Where a complaint is not upheld the complainant must be given a response and informed of any further action that might be appropriate in their situation.

• **Step 3 - The role of the Secretary of State for Education**

If parents think that the governors have failed to consider the complaint properly and reasonably, parents can raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Education. However, it is important to understand that this is not a general right of appeal for any parent who disagrees with the governors' decision. If the governors have followed a proper procedure and considered the complaint reasonably the Secretary of State for Education will not reverse their decision.

If parents wish to raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Education they should write to:

The Secretary of State for Education,
 Department for Education,
 Sanctuary Buildings,
 Great Smith Street,
 London. SW1P 3BT

In the letter parents should explain:

- a) what the complaint to the governors was;
- b) what response they have made to it;
- c) why parents think that the governors have not followed a proper procedure in considering your complaint, and/or;
- d) why parents think that their consideration of it was unreasonable.

Revised	Autumn 20
Review Date:	Autumn 21

Appendix 1

St Chad's C.E. Primary School
Complaints and Compliments

Please complete this form and return it to the school who will then forward it to the Chair of the Governing Body. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

1. Name _____

2. Address _____

3. Telephone Number Home _____ Work _____

4. Name of Child _____

5. Details of the Complaint/Compliment (please include the date or period of time to which your complaint relates and confirm whether you have already expressed your concerns informally, and to whom and when).

6. Do you have a suggestion for change?
(Please attach copies of any more information you have to back up your complaint such as letters or report).

Signed: _____ Date: _____