



THE CATHEDRAL SCHOOL  
OF ST. SAVIOUR AND ST. MARY OVERIE

# Complaints Procedure

As a Church of England School, Christian values are at the heart of all we do. We value our relationship with parents and all members of the school and local community. If you have a concern we want to know about it so that it can be dealt with immediately. Most concerns can be dealt with easily and quickly, but to ensure all concerns are handled effectively the Governing Body has adopted a complaints policy and procedure.

The School's Complaints Procedure is devised with the intention that it will :

- usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- be simple to use and understand;
- treat complaints confidentially;
- allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- inform future practice so that a problem is unlikely to recur;
- reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as we work together for the good of the pupils in the school;
- ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil will never be affected by a parental complaint;
- discourage anonymous complaints;
- actively encourage strong home-school links;
- ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the complaint;
- be regularly reviewed

## **EXPRESSING A CONCERN: NOTES FOR PARENTS**

### **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 resolve your concern. The majority of concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to a member of staff. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as strictly confidential.

Be assured that no matter what you wish to share with us, our support and respect for you and your child 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; we will let you know the timescale within which you may expect a response. Please allow time for any action we may take to be effective. Our procedure is in three stages outlined below:

### **What to do first (Stage 1 – informal)**

Please contact your child's class teacher, or other appropriate member of staff, and arrange a time when you can discuss your concern. It may be possible for you to see the member of staff straight away but normally it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through. It may be possible to give a response immediately, but where any investigation or information is required, a response will be given within five *school* days.

## What to do next (Stage 2- Formal)

If you are still unhappy, ask for an appointment with the Headteacher within 10 school days of receiving a response under Stage 1. It is helpful if you can give a brief outline of your concern on the School's complaints form when you make the appointment. After your discussion with the headteacher you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out *depending on the nature of your complaint*. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible and the headteacher will send you a written response within 10 school days of your meeting. If it is not possible to respond within this timescale, the headteacher will tell you when you can expect a response.

## If you are still unhappy (Stage 3- Formal)

The problem will normally be resolved by this stage. However, if you still have concerns and they have not been resolved you may ask for your complaint to be considered by the complaints panel of the Governing Body by writing to the Clerk to the Governors\* c/o The School. The complaints panel will be formed of three governors who have had no prior involvement in the complaint, they will listen to you, to the headteacher and, if appropriate, any others involved and come to a decision. You may bring a friend to the hearing if you wish.

\* An alternative name may be given where appropriate.

The table below summarises the procedure:

Stage	Description	Timescale for receipt of complaint	Time-limit for School's response
<b>Informal Stage 1</b>	Informal discussions with relevant member of staff and/or headteacher		As soon as possible but no later than 5 school days.
<b>Formal Stage 2</b>	Written complaint to Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if complaint is about the Headteacher)	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 1	Acknowledge within 3 school days. Response normally within 10 school days.
<b>Formal Stage 3</b>	Governors' Complaints' Panel Hearing	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 2	<i>Clerk to acknowledge receipt within 5 school days.</i> Hearing set up within 20 school days with 10 days' notice of meeting. Agenda and papers sent out 7 days in advance. Decision letter within 3 school days.

*In all cases if any stage in the procedure is likely to take longer than publicised, parents will be informed of new timescales and the reasons for delay.*