

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School



Complaints Policy

Date Adopted:	September 2019
Reviewed	Autumn 2023

Signed: MR J Rushton.....(Headteacher)

Date: Autumn 2023

Signed: Mrs R Fisher.....(Chair/Governor)

Date: Autumn 2023

School Mission statement

With Jesus we love, learn and pray; to grow in the St Cuthbert's way.

Our Values

Loving Honest
Charitable Respectful
Aspirational Faithful
Positive Forgiving

School's Aims

To proclaim Jesus Christ as the centre of our school community.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." **Proverbs 3:5**

To enjoy times of prayer and worship together.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, thy kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." **Matthew 9-10**

To be a vibrant place; where we can all feel loved, and all visitors are welcomed with warmth and respect. Recognising that everybody is created in the 'image and likeness of God.'

"Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."
Romans 15:7

To promote; a love of learning, an enthusiasm to succeed and aspirations to 'dream big'.

"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." **Proverbs 16:3**

To ensure each and every one of us has the opportunity to thrive; to share the 'gifts' we have been blessed with, and to achieve to our full potential in all that we do.

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." **Phillipians 4:13**

To feel safe, respected, loved and valued, so we have the confidence and resilience to 'make a difference.'

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." **Psalm 46.1** *ning light in our parish,*

To be a shining light in our parish, in our community and in our world.

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them."

Matthew 18:20

Be a place where it is ok to make mistakes. Forgiveness makes every day a new beginning.

"Forgive and you will be forgiven." **Luke 6**

School Complaints Policy & Procedures

School Complaints Procedure

General Principles:

- This procedure is intended to allow you to raise a concern or complaint relating to the school, or the services that it provides.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible. In general, any matter raised more than 3 months after the event, being complained of, will not be considered.

Raising a concern or complaint

1) Informal Stage

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment, requested via the school office. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns it may be appropriate to address them directly to the head teacher (or to the chair of the governing body, if the complaint is about the head teacher).

If you are uncertain about who to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the clerk to the governing body.

2) Formal Stage

If your concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal stage you may choose to put the complaint in writing and pass it to the head teacher, who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. If the complaint is about the head teacher, your complaint should be passed to the clerk to the governing body, for the attention of the chair of the governing body.

A complaint form is provided to assist you. You should include details which might assist the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents. It is very important that you include a clear statement of the actions that you would like the school to take to resolve your concern. Without this, it is much more difficult to proceed.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the school office. The envelope should be addressed to the head teacher, or to the clerk to the governing body, as appropriate.

The head teacher (or chair) may invite you to a meeting to clarify your concerns and to explore the possibility of an informal resolution. If you accept that invitation, you may be accompanied by a friend, if you wish, to assist you in explaining the nature of your concerns.

It is possible that your complaint will be resolved through a meeting with the head teacher (or chair). If not, arrangements will be made for the matter to be fully investigated, using the appropriate procedure. In any case you should learn in writing, usually within 5 days of the school receiving your formal complaint, of how the school intends to proceed. This notification should include an indication of the anticipated timescale.

Any investigation will begin as soon as possible and when it has been concluded, you will be informed in writing of its conclusion.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school, in handling the complaint. Any such request must be made in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A review Request form is provided for your convenience.

Review Process

Any review of the process followed by the school will be conducted by a panel of 3 members of the governing body. This will usually take place within 10 school days of receipt of your request.

The review will normally be conducted through a consideration of written submissions, but reasonable requests to make oral representations should be considered sympathetically.

Meeting Request Form

I wish to meet to discuss the following matter.

Brief details to be discussed

Dates/times when it would be most convenient for a meeting
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Your Name:

Relationship with school (e.g. parent of a pupil on the school roll)

Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed)

Your address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime

Evening

Email address:

Signed Date

.....

(Please complete and return to the school office)

School Use:

Date form received:

Date response sent:

Received by:

Response sent by:

Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it, via the school office, to the head teacher (or clerk to the governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your Name:

Relationship with school (e.g. parent of a pupil on the school roll)

Pupil's name (if relevant to the matter to be discussed)

Your address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime

Evening

Email address:

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc.) to allow the matter to be fully investigated.

You may continue on separate paper or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of pages attached =

Complaint Form continued

What action if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint?
(i.e. who have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signed Date
.....

School Use:

Date form received:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

School Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to the head teacher (or clerk to the governing body) who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.

Your Name:

Your address:

Telephone numbers

Daytime

Evening

Email address:

Dear Sir / Madam,

I submitted a formal complaint to the school on and am dissatisfied by the procedure that has been followed.

My complaint was submitted to and I received a response

from on

.....

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the response(s) from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

Number of additional pages attached =

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Signed Date

.....

School Use:

Date form received:

Date acknowledgement sent:

Received by:

Acknowledgement sent by:

Complaint referred to:			
Date:			

Addendum to the School Complaints Policy

St Cuthbert's is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. During the Covid-19 pandemic the governing board of St Cuthbert's school have agreed that alternative arrangements may be required to safely progress complaints through the various stages of the school complaints policy

Formal Stage 1

If the Headteacher wishes to seek clarification of the complaint from the complainant but considers it inadvisable to invite "visitors" to school due to the pandemic, an alternative method of communication may be considered. This may include convening a "virtual" meeting or a telephone call.

When making their response at Stage 1, the Headteacher should request if the complainant wishes to escalate their complaint to Stage 2, they should contact the clerk by email and provide the email address of the clerk.

Formal Stage 2

During any period in which corona virus restrictions are in place the governing board may choose to convene the hearing by remote access. When making this decision governors and Trustees must consider the needs of the complainant (as far as this is possible) and the latest public health guidance (including the [guidance for full opening of schools](#))

When deciding to hold a hearing "remotely" the governing board must ensure that:

- all the participants agree to the use of remote access
- all the participants have access to the technology which will allow them to hear and speak throughout the meeting, and to see and be seen,
- all the participants will be able to put across their point of view or fulfil their function
- the meeting can be held fairly and transparently via remote access

Arranging a remote access meeting

When the governing board have determined that a "remote" hearing should be held the Clerk will explain the technology the Board propose to use to the complainant and should ensure that the complainant is in agreement with this. If the complainant does not agree to a meeting being held via remote access the complainant should be made aware that the hearing is likely to be delayed.

Governing boards, must comply with relevant equalities legislation and recognise that some participants may find it difficult to participate in a remote access meeting (for example, if someone has a disability or if English is not their first language).

Running the meeting

When a meeting is held via remote access, every effort should be made by the Chair to check the complainant understand the proceedings and can engage with them, to ensure the meeting is conducted fairly.

If, once the meeting starts, the meeting cannot proceed fairly (for example, because a complainant cannot access the meeting), the governing board should adjourn the meeting.

The use of remote access does not alter other procedural requirements for complaints hearings. Parents may bring a friend or representative, as normal.

To help meetings run smoothly and ensure they are accessible for all parties the Clerk should:

- provide clear instructions to parties about how to join the meeting virtually, and distribute the relevant papers in a timely manner ahead of the meeting
- ensure the chair is prepared to explain the agenda at the start of the meeting, and to provide clear guidance on how the meeting will be run, for example:
 - o how participants should indicate they wish to speak
 - o how any 'chat' functions should be used
 - o whether there will be any breaks in proceedings
- consider holding a pre-meeting with attendees to check that the available technology is suitable, and all participants understand how to access the meeting