



In a caring school, such as St Mary's, we wish to resolve any concerns, complaints, issue or problems, as informally as possible and in ways that are fair, impartial, simple, confidential, non-adversarial, fast, effective and appropriate. Therefore, anyone who has concerns of any kind, should first discuss the matter with the School. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter informally first. Only if the complaint cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction will more formal action be needed.

### **What you can expect from the school**

- You can expect your complaint to be recorded, to be taken seriously and to be thoroughly investigated.
- If you write or leave a message, you can usually expect the school to get back to you within 24 hours (during the school week in term time). This may not be a full response but will let you know that your complaint has been received and is being dealt with.
- You can expect staff to be friendly, courteous and supportive.
- You can expect staff to be professional.
- In dealing with a complaint, the school may not agree with you and may have to put forward a view or make a decision that you may not like. However, we will always explain our reasons and decision fully.
- Your child will be involved only if the complaint directly and personally concerns them. Parents are sometimes worried that if they complain there will be adverse consequences for their child. The school is firmly committed to ensuring that this is never the case.
- You can expect a meeting at any reasonable time and usually within five school days if you request it.
- You can expect members of staff to treat the complaint with appropriate confidentiality.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage 1: (Informal)**

Where a complaint is made regarding the day to day running of the school, the treatment of an individual student, or the implementation of a school policy, in the first instance, parents should attempt to resolve the problem by bringing it to the attention of their child's form tutor, class teacher, Head of Year or Head of Department, if the complaint relates to a particular subject area.

If the problem cannot be resolved through these channels, or if the problem is deemed more serious, then the parent should contact by telephone, or in writing, a member of the Senior Pastoral or Senior Leadership Team, either the Head of Key Stage or the Deputy Headteacher who will offer to meet them to discuss the problem.

The Headteacher will become involved at a final stage in the informal process to attempt to resolve the problem without recourse to Stage 2 (the formal stage) of this procedure.

#### **Stage 2: (Formal)**

If the above channels do not resolve the problem, parents may refer the matter to the Governing Body for consideration. To do this, parents should write to the Chair of Governors at the school address outlining the nature of the complaint.

The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and offer to organise a meeting with the parent to try to resolve the matter. At the meeting, a small panel of governors will listen to the parent's complaint and the school's response. The Chair of the panel will consider all information presented and, following the meeting, reach a decision. The decision of the governors will be communicated in writing to the parent, after the meeting, usually within 5 working days.

## Support

- At any stage of the complaints procedure, parents are welcome to bring with them a supportive friend who is not involved in the complaint.
- Within the complaints procedure it is not appropriate for the school to engage in meetings to which parents bring legal representatives or advisors.
- The school will not generally enter into correspondence with solicitors or others in place of direct communication with parents.

## Anonymous complaints

- Anonymous complaints are unhelpful and will not usually be acted upon.

## Publicising the Complaints Policy

- The policy will be available on St Mary's Catholic School website.

## Conclusion

St Mary's Catholic School hopes this procedure will not be needed. For the very rare occasion when it is, it will be followed objectively. If a complainant tries to re-open the same issue, the Chair of Governors will inform her/him that the procedure has been followed and is now closed.

<b>Policy review date</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>Approved (<i>insert date</i>)</b>
December 2015	FGB- Academy Directors	10/12/15