

**ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,
CRAYFORD**

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

June 2009

Mission Statement

The teachers and governors of St. Joseph's provide a broad, balanced curriculum to enable each child to achieve the highest standards of education in a Catholic ethos.

THE AIMS OF ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ARE:

- to nurture the uniqueness of each individual as a member of God's family
- to ensure that the Catholic faith is at the heart of the whole school experience
- to create a well ordered supportive environment in an atmosphere conducive to learning where every child feels confident and safe
- to create an atmosphere of reconciliation, where pupils can accept the consequences of their own actions, and be encouraged to make more responsible future choices
- to deliver a relevant curriculum with equal access for all pupils
- to encourage and support each child to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable
- to encourage each child to become a concerned compassionate member of society determined to promote justice and peace
- to promote good working relationships based on mutual cooperation and trust
- to provide a welcoming place for parents
- to work in harmony with the parish and the local community.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Complaints Procedure

Introduction

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about the school or the education provided, please discuss the matter with your child's class teacher at the earliest opportunity. The school considers any concerns very seriously and most problems can be resolved at this stage.

Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions, exclusion appeals, decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the school.

All other complaints are handled by the school according to the arrangements set out below.

Aims and Objectives

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Framework of Principles

This policy will

- be easily accessible and publicised
- be simple to use and understand
- be impartial
- be non-adversarial
- allow swift handling with established time-limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation)
- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary
- provide information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Informal Stage

Every effort should be made to resolve the difficulty informally in discussion with either the class teacher, a senior member of staff or the head teacher.

Formal Stage 1

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion with the class teacher, and you wish to have the matter formally investigated by an appropriate person from the school, please write to the head teacher outlining your concern

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of the school
- the interpretation of school policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at the school

it will be formally investigated by head teacher.

If the matter is about:

- school policies as determined by the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the head teacher

then you will be asked to complete a formal complaint form which is obtainable from the clerk to the governors.

Formal Stage 2

Your formal complaint will be investigated by the Chairman of Governors.

The person carrying out the investigation will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the school and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He/she will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint.

If it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case but you are not entitled to know which procedure or the final outcome.

Formal Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the result from the Stage 2 review, you may choose to refer your complaint to Stage 3 of the procedure. This must be done in writing to the school within 15 working days of the completion of Stage 2.

If the complainant is not satisfied after the Chairman of Governors has completed their review at stage 2, a panel of 3 governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body.

The panel will consist of governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a friend/partner if you wish, to put your case. The head teacher will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within ten working days of the meeting.

The decision of the panel is final. If you are not satisfied with the way the governors have dealt with this matter you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure.

Availability

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request. Parental requests for records, policies or general school information will be charged at the nominal amount of 20p per photocopied sheet.