



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

At All Saints' Catholic Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality education within a caring Catholic community. We welcome concerns and complaints as an opportunity to improve.

This procedure sets out how complaints will be managed fairly, transparently and in line with the Best Practice Guidance issued by the Department for Education.

We aim to:

- Resolve concerns at the earliest possible stage
- Treat all complainants with respect and impartiality
- Provide clear timescales and consistent processes
- Ensure complaints are handled confidentially and efficiently
- Maintain positive relationships wherever possible

Scope of This Procedure

This procedure applies to complaints about any aspect of the school's operations, provision or services.

It may be used by:

- Parents and carers of pupils
- Members of the local community
- Other individuals with a legitimate interest in the school

Complaints Not in Scope

The following matters are covered by separate statutory procedures and are not dealt with under this policy:

- Admissions to school
- Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs
- School reorganisation proposals
- Child Protection matters
- Pupil exclusions
- Staff grievances or disciplinary matters
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints about third-party services using school premises

Where a complaint falls outside this procedure, the school will inform the complainant of the appropriate process.

Timeliness

Complaints must be raised within **three months** of the incident occurring, or within three months of the complainant becoming aware of the issue.

The school will consider complaints outside this timeframe only in exceptional circumstances.

If published timescales cannot be met due to further investigation being required, the school will:

- Inform the complainant in writing
- Provide a clear explanation for the delay
- Issue a revised deadline

Equal Access and Reasonable Adjustments

The school will make reasonable adjustments to enable complainants to access this procedure, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Complainants may be accompanied to meetings by a friend or relative.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled with discretion. Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Records of complaints will be kept securely in accordance with data protection and records retention guidance.

Monitoring and Record Keeping

At all formal stages, the following will be recorded:

- Name of complainant
- Date received
- Nature of complaint
- Investigation undertaken
- Outcome and reasoning
- Any action taken
- Complainant's response

The Headteacher will ensure records are maintained appropriately.

THE STAGES OF THE COMPLAINT

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is in everyone's interest to resolve concerns informally wherever possible.

- The complainant will raise the concern with the relevant staff member.
- The staff member will respond within **5 school days**.
- A summary of the discussion and outcome will be recorded.

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, the complainant will contact the Chair of Governors via the Clerk.

If the matter is not resolved, the complainant may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Headteacher

The complaint must be submitted in writing to the Headteacher.

Within **5 school days**, the Headteacher will:

- Acknowledge receipt
- Confirm the investigation process and timescale

The Headteacher will investigate and provide a written outcome within **15 school days**.

The response will:

- State the findings
- Confirm whether the complaint is upheld in full, in part, or not upheld
- Explain any actions taken
- Inform the complainant of their right to escalate within **10 school days**

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, it will move directly to Stage 2a.

Stage 2a – Formal Complaint to the Chair of Governors

(If the complaint concerns the Headteacher or a Governor)

The complaint must be submitted in writing to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk.

Within **5 school days**, the Chair will acknowledge receipt and confirm arrangements.

The Chair will investigate and issue a written outcome within **15 school days**, unless a revised deadline is issued in writing.

The outcome letter will:

- State findings
- Confirm whether upheld in full, in part, or not upheld
- Detail any actions taken
- Explain the right to request a Stage 3 panel within **10 school days**

Stage 3 – Complaints Appeal Panel (Final School-Based Stage)

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they must write to the Clerk within **10 school days** of receiving the Stage 2 outcome.

The Clerk will:

- Acknowledge receipt within **5 school days**
- Convene a panel within **20 school days**
- Circulate all documentation at least **5 school days** prior to the hearing

The Panel

- Will consist of three governors with no prior involvement
- Will be impartial and independent
- Will hear both parties
- Will make findings of fact

The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- Decide on appropriate actions
- Recommend changes to school systems or procedures

The written decision will be issued within **5 school days** of the hearing and will explain:

- The panel's findings
- The reasons for the decision
- Any actions to be taken
- That this is the final school-based stage

Final Stage – Referral to the Department for Education

If the complainant believes the school has not followed its complaints procedure correctly, they may refer the matter to the:

Department for Education

School Complaints Unit

Piccadilly Gate

Manchester

M1 2WD

The Department for Education will not re-investigate the complaint but will consider whether the school followed its published procedure and complied with education legislation.

Unreasonable, Persistent or Abusive Complaints

The school expects all members of the community to:

- Treat staff with courtesy and respect
- Avoid aggressive or threatening behaviour
- Allow reasonable time for responses

Where behaviour becomes unreasonable, persistent, abusive or harassing, the school will:

- Write to the individual explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable
- Set clear expectations for future contact
- Restrict communication to written correspondence
- Require meetings to be attended by a second member of staff

Any restriction will be proportionate, time-limited and subject to review after **six months**.

Legitimate complaints will always be considered, even where restrictions are in place.

Physical or Verbal Aggression

The Governing Body will not tolerate aggression towards members of the school community. Where necessary, the school will:

- Ban individuals from site
- Seek legal remedies
- Contact the police

Policy Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Ratified by the Governing Body
- Published on the school website

The Governing Body confirms it has had regard to the Department for Education's Best Practice Guidance when adopting this policy.

This policy was last reviewed on May 2026