



# ST. SAVIOUR'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

#### Mission Statement

*The person and teaching of Jesus Christ are central to our Catholic School community.*

*We look to Jesus for example and inspiration in all areas of school life.*

*His Gospel values underpin and permeate everything we do.*

#### Rationale

1. Complaints are not easy to define and it is therefore important to bear in mind that what may be initially presented as a complaint, is in fact a problem or a concern.
2. Complaints need to be investigated speedily, efficiently, fully and fairly. All aspects of each complaint must be given due consideration.

#### Aims

The aim of this complaints procedure is to ensure that a complaint is fully considered and wherever possible resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

#### Scope

1. The procedures do not cover complaints relating to the following matters, which are dealt with under other (statutory) arrangements: -
  - \* admission of pupils
  - \* exclusion of pupils
  - \* assessments of special educational needs
2. During the investigation of a complaint under these procedures, it may become clear that other procedures will need to be invoked - for example, relating to Section 409 complaints, child protection, staff discipline or staff grievance procedures.

#### Principles for Inclusion

1. Complaints, ' however received, will be dealt with as quickly and as fairly as possible, and will be recorded in writing.
2. Complainants will be kept fully informed at every stage of the procedure.
3. All staff will be made aware of the procedures and will be given guidance in distinguishing between a worry, a problem or concern and an actual complaint.
4. It will be at the Headteacher's discretion whether or not anonymous complaints are investigated.

## Procedures

### 1. Introduction stage

- 1) Every effort will be made to resolve concerns and complaints as they arise by informal means.
- 2) Wherever possible this will be done by discussion with the member of staff felt to be most directly involved.
- 3) Only where the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of such discussions will it be necessary to move to the next formal stage of the procedures.

### 2. Stage One

- 1) Once a complaint has been received either in writing, by telephone or verbally by the complainant in person, it will be recorded in a complaints register, along with the nature and details of the complaint and the name of the person who will be dealing with it.
- 2) The complainant will be advised who is to deal with the complaint and how that person can be contacted, and the date of the initial investigation, which should be within 10 school days of the receipt of the complaint.
- 3) The complainant will be informed that he/she may be accompanied by a friend or relative, and that all conversations and correspondence will be treated as confidential.
- 4) The person dealing with the complaint will, as appropriate, interview the complainant and any witnesses. Pupil witnesses will normally be interviewed by a member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable.
- 5) Following this investigation, the complainant will be informed in writing within 24 hours of the outcome:
  - \* The complaint is upheld and appropriate action will be taken
  - \* The complaint is not upheld and no action will be taken
  - \* The complaint is a matter of staff discipline and will be pursued under the school's disciplinary and grievance procedures
  - \* The complaint is a matter which is subject to child protection procedures and will be dealt with under the appropriate code of practice
- 6) The complainant will also be informed of the right to request a hearing of the complaint by a panel of the Governing Body if he/she is dissatisfied with the outcome of stage one.
- 7) If the complaint is directed against the Headteacher, the person designated to deal with the complaint shall be the Chair of Governors (or his/her nominee).

### 3. **Stage Two**

- 1) If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of stage one, he or she may request a hearing of the complaint by a panel of the Governing Body.
- 2) The Governors' panel will meet within three school weeks of receiving the complaint. The Governors' panel will adhere to the procedures for investigating the complaint and reporting to the complainant as set out in 2(4) and 2(5) above.

### 4. **Conduct of the Governors' Panel Hearing**

- 1) The aim of each meeting is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. The chairperson of the panel will open the meeting by introducing to each other those present and explaining the reason for the meeting.
- 2) The clerk to the panel will take minutes of the meeting, and these will be made available to all parties.
- 3) The complainant or his/her representative will be invited to present his/her case and to explain why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the previous stage.
- 4) The Headteacher and members of the panel will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant.
- 5) The Headteacher or his/her representative will be invited to present his/her case, explaining the action taken so far and the reasons for the outcome.
- 6) The complainant and members of the panel will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the Headteacher.
- 7) The Headteacher or his/her representative will have the opportunity to sum up their case. This summing up may not introduce new evidence.
- 8) The complainant or his/her representative will have the opportunity to sum up their case. This summing up may not introduce new evidence.
- 9) When the Governors are satisfied that the complaint and, where possible, any solutions have been fully discussed, they should ask all parties (except the clerk) to withdraw so that they can consider their decision. The Governors may ask the Complainant and the Headteacher to wait while they consider their decision so that they may call them back to seek further clarification. If this occurs, all parties should be present.
- 10) Following this investigation, the complainant will be informed in writing and within 48 hours of the outcome:
  - \* The complaint is upheld and appropriate action will be taken
  - \* The complaint is not upheld and no action will be taken
  - \* The complaint is a matter of staff discipline and will be pursued under

the school's disciplinary and grievance procedures

- \* The complaint is a matter which is subject to child protection procedures and will be dealt with under the appropriate code of practice