



Complaints Policy

Policy Purpose

The governors and staff at St Mary's want everyone to enjoy, and benefit from, the time they spend in school. As part of that commitment we want to ensure all parents and pupils complaints are dealt with politely, quickly and to the satisfaction of all parties.

The aim of this document is to reaffirm the partnership between pupils, staff, parents and governors, and to support the home school contract. It is important that all parties feel able to discuss any issues of concern and agreeable solutions can be found.

What should you do if you have a concern ?

Please tell us about it so that we can talk with you and find the best way to resolve the situation. We encourage all parents/guardians to take an active interest in the school and welcome suggestions for improvement.

Whatever you say will be treated in the strictest confidence, and our support and respect for you and your child will not be affected in any way. We will do our best to deal with your concerns as quickly as possible, all we ask is that you to let us know about it as soon as possible.

In the first instance please speak to the class teacher. If you feel the issue still remains unresolved, please make an appointment to speak to the headteacher. Your complaint will be investigated thoroughly and you will be notified of the outcome. Naturally we hope that issues can be resolved at this stage, however, if you are still not satisfied then you can make a formal complaint.

What is a complaint ?

It is usually a concern that has not been adequately addressed. It can relate to a number of issues, for example the way in which an initial concern was handled; the conduct or actions of pupils; the action or lack of action of members of staff; inappropriate discipline; or lack of information.

If you wish to take the matter further, you will need:

- a) to write to the Chair of Governors, alternatively you can ask the school to make an appointment for you to see the Chair of Governors. Once the Chair has completed investigations (this will include talking to the Headteacher) you will receive a letter as to the action that will be taken.
- b) if you are still not satisfied you can ask for the matter to be referred to the Complaints Committee. The Committee will listen to you, the Headteacher and others involved (for example Local Authority representatives) before reaching a decision; you will then be told about the decision.

This table summarises the stages when a concern is raised or a complaint is made

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	TIMESCALES FOR ACTION
Informal		
1	Parent discusses concerns with class teacher	As soon as possible
2	If parents are still unsatisfied a meeting may be arranged between Headteacher or designated member of staff and parents	Within 7 days after request
Formal		
1	Acknowledgement by the Headteacher of receipt of a written complaint (if a parent has made an oral complaint, this would not apply)	Within 3 days of receipt
2	Investigation by Headteacher or nominated member of staff/ governors, which would normally include a meeting with the parent(s).	Within 7 days or at a mutually agreed time
3	Headteacher or nominated person sends written notification of the outcome of the investigation to the parents. The parents are told that if they are not satisfied they may send a written complaint to the Chair of the Governing Body. The headteacher may wish to refer the matter to the Chair of the Governing Body.	Normally within 10 working days
4	Chair of the Governing Body, or a nominated governor, acknowledges receipt of a written complaint saying the matter will be investigated and indicating timings. The complaint is investigated.	Within 3 days Normally within 10 days
5	Chair of the Governing Body sends a summary of findings and a decision to the parents. The parents are told if they are not satisfied that they may ask for the matter to be referred to the Governor's Complaints Committee.	Within 5 days of receipt of the Chair's letter
6	Governors' Complaint Committee considers the complaint. Complaint and Headteacher's report of investigation sent to all parties 5 days before the meeting.	Within 15 days of the referral in 3 above
7	Decision of Governor's Complaints Committee notified to parents.	Within 2 days of meeting

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the London Diocese Board for Schools document: *Working Together - guidance relating to General Parental Complaints in voluntary aided and foundation schools*. If you would like more information please speak to the headteacher or the Chair of Governors.