



POLICY FOR SCHOOL COMPLAINTS

Committee:	Governing Body
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Review cycle:	Three years
Required to publish on website?	Yes
Statutory:	Yes

(excepting issues where there are set procedures, such as the delivery of the National Curriculum, arrangements for collective worship and religious education, misapplication of the National Curriculum, Special Needs assessments, admissions appeals, pupil exclusions, staff discipline, grievances and dismissals, allegations of child abuse and other child protection issues, allegations of financial impropriety or criminal neglect).

Overview

At The St Marylebone C E Bridge School we take complaints very seriously. In an effort to keep the number of complaints to a minimum, we also place a high priority on informal complaints from parents. Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the number that develop into formal complaints, they ought to be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. The formal procedures will need to be followed when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Procedure

Parents or carers should feel free to raise concerns informally with class teachers or more senior members of staff. If any parent or carer is not satisfied with the outcome of any preliminary discussion, or considers the matter too serious to be raised in this way, then the following procedure will apply. It will also apply if the member of staff with whom a matter is originally raised thinks that it should receive more attention.

1. The complaint may be made in person, on the telephone or in writing; a complaint form is attached which may be found helpful. The complaint should be made in the first instance to the Head of School who will decide who are the appropriate people in the School to investigate it.
2. The complainant will be told within 5 school days, either by telephone or post, that the complaint is being investigated.
3. The member or members of staff who are responsible for carrying out the investigation will do so thoroughly. This may include interviewing the person who made the complaint, and any other relevant individuals. The School will decide which member or members of staff and/or pupils and/or

others should be interviewed. The School will keep a written record of all relevant conversations and of the results of any other investigations made.

4. The School aims to deal with complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible. Other than in exceptional circumstances, the person making the complaint will receive a written response within 20 school days of receipt of the complaint.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and wishes to take the matter further, the complainant may refer the matter in writing to the Head of School. The Head of School will review the file personally and make such additional investigation as he/she thinks fit, including interviewing any staff and pupils involved, and the person making the complaint. The outcome of any such further investigation will be notified to the complainant in writing no later than 10 school days of receipt of the request.
6. If the complainant is still not satisfied, or if the complaint is about the Head of School, he/she should write to the Chair of Governors, c/o the School. The Chair or the Clerk to the Governors will acknowledge the request within 5 school days and will try to resolve issues within 20 school days, by looking at what has happened so far and suggesting a solution, either in writing or, if both parties are willing, at a meeting. This is intended to ensure that the complainant and those involved at the School understand all sides of the question. It does not necessarily mean that there will be any change from the Head of School's response.
7. A complainant then has the right to write to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o the School, to ask for referral of the complaint to the Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel. The complainant should explain why he/she is not satisfied and what he/she expects from a further review. The Panel will decide whether it will hear all parties at the same time, or separately. Written acknowledgement of receipt of the notice of appeal, and further information about procedures at this stage, will be provided within 5 school days and the complaint will be considered by three governors who have had no previous involvement with the matter. If the complainant wishes to submit any documentation for the Governors to consider, this must be received at the School within 5 school days of the date of the acknowledgement. A date will be fixed for the complaint to be heard, within 20 school days of the clerk's receipt of the request for the hearing, and the outcome notified in writing to the complainant within 5 school days from the date of the hearing.
8. The School will keep a copy of all correspondence and notes on file, separately from the pupil's personal record. Strict confidentiality will be observed at all times.

NOTE: A person who makes a complaint may be asked to, or may at his/her own request, attend the School for a meeting/interview, and may bring a companion to any such meeting if he/she wishes.

The Head of School will maintain a file containing summary details of the date, nature and outcome of each complaint received. Any pattern of complaint will be investigated.

All staff will receive guidance on working with parents. Details will be included during Induction and in the staff handbook, given to all new staff when they arrive.