



St Leonard's C. E. Primary School

Complaints Procedures

Date of Policy: Autumn 2017

Date of review: Autumn 2020

Mission Statement

As an Anglican school, we seek to nurture faith and inspire success. Through innovative teaching and working together, we foster independence, respect for one another and a love of learning. A varied curriculum, supported by the message of the Gospel, enables each child to flourish and provides them with the opportunity to achieve and make a positive contribution to society.

St Leonard's Ethos Statement

Recognising our historic foundation, we will preserve and develop our religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with our Parish Church and the Diocese of Southwark within its Multi Academy Trust.

We will aim to serve our community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We will encourage and nurture an understanding of the Gospel, promoting the Christian values of Faith, Hope and Love to all our pupils and their families.

Introduction

As a Church of England School, Christian values are at the heart of all we do. We value our relationship with parents and all members of the school and local community. If you have a concern we want to know about it so that it can be dealt with immediately. Most concerns can be dealt with easily and quickly but to ensure all concerns are handled effectively the Governing Body has adopted a complaints policy and procedure.

The School's Complaints Procedure is devised with the intention that it will:

- ☐ usually be possible to resolve problems by informal means;
- ☐ be simple to use and understand;
- ☐ treat complaints confidentially;
- ☐ allow problems to be handled swiftly;
- ☐ inform future practice so that the problem is unlikely to recur;
- ☐ reaffirm the partnership between parents, staff and governors as they work together for the good of the pupils in the school;
- ☐ ensure that the school's attitude to a pupil would never be affected by a parental complaint;
- ☐ discourage anonymous complaints;
- ☐ actively encourage strong home-school links;
- ☐ ensure that all staff have opportunities to discuss and understand the school's response to concerns and complaints made by parents;
- ☐ ensure that any person complained against has equal rights with the person making the complaint;
- ☐ regularly review its system for monitoring concerns and complaints received from parents.

EXPRESSING A CONCERN: NOTES FOR PARENTS

If you have a concern

We would like you to tell us about it so that we can talk with you and see how best to resolve your concern. The majority of concerns can be resolved informally by speaking to a member of staff. We welcome suggestions for improving our work in the school. Whatever your concern, please know that we shall treat it as strictly confidential.

Be assured that no matter what you wish to share with us, our support and respect for you and your child in the school will not be affected in any way; please do not delay telling us of your concern. It is difficult for us to investigate properly an incident or problem which is more than a day or two old.

After hearing your concern we will act as quickly as we can; we will let you know the timescale within which you may expect a response. Please allow time for any action we may take to be effective. Our procedure is in three stages outlined below:

What to do first (Stage 1 – informal)

Please contact your child's class teacher or other appropriate member of staff, and arrange a time when you can discuss your concern. It may be possible for you to see the member of staff straight away but normally it is better to make an appointment so that you can sit and talk things through. It may be possible to give a response immediately, but where any investigation or information is required, a response will be given within five days.

What to do next (Stage 2- Formal)

If you are still unhappy, ask for an appointment with the Headteacher within 10 school days of receiving a response under Stage 1. It is helpful if you can give a brief outline of your concern on the School's complaints form when you make the appointment. After your discussion with the headteacher you may have to wait a short time while investigations are carried out. Every effort will be made to resolve the situation as quickly as possible and the headteacher will send you a written response within 5 school days of your meeting. If it is not possible to respond within this timescale, the headteacher will tell you when you can expect a response. The headteacher may also involve other members of staff (eg: Inclusion Team) with your consent.

If you are still unhappy (Stage 3- Formal)

The problem will normally be resolved by this stage. However, if you still have concerns and they have not been resolved you may ask for your complaint to be considered by the complaints panel of the Governing Body by writing to the Chair of Governors (Mr Jason Aspell) c/o The School. Complaint forms are available from the school office. The complaints panel will be formed of three governors who have had no prior involvement in the complaint. They will listen to you, to the headteacher and, if appropriate, any others involved and come to a decision. You may bring a friend to the hearing if you wish.

The table below summarises the procedure:

Stage	Description	Timescale for receipt of complaint	Time-limit for School's response
Informal Stage 1	Informal discussions with class teacher or other member of staff (eg: Inclusion Team; Senior Leaders) and in exceptional circumstances with the headteacher.		Ideally as soon as possible but no later than 5 school days.
Formal Stage 2	Written complaint to Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if complaint is about the Headteacher)	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 1	Acknowledge within 2 school days. Response normally within 5 school days.
Formal Stage 3	Governors' Complaints' Panel Hearing	Within 10 school days of receipt of response to stage 2	Hearing set up within 15 school days with 10 days notice of meeting. Agenda and papers sent out 7 days in advance. Decision letter within 2 school days.

In all cases if any stage in the procedure is likely to take longer than publicised, parents will be informed of new timescales and the reasons for delay.