



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

Concerns and Complaints Guidance

*Teach me good judgement and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments.
Psalm 119:66*

Guidance notes for Parents / Carers

If a parent / carer has a concern or complaint

School would like parents to tell us about it. The school welcomes suggestions for improving our work in the school. Be assured that no matter what parents want to tell staff, our support and respect for them and their child in the school will not be affected in any way. Please tell the school of any concern as soon as possible. It is difficult for the school to investigate properly an incident or problem which has happened some time ago.

What to do first

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with the child's class teacher, which can be arranged for the beginning or end of the school day.

Any teacher or the School Office Manager can direct you to the most appropriate person to deal with the complaint. If parents have a complaint which they feel should be looked at by the Headteacher, in the first instance they can make contact via the school office. It is usually best to discuss the problem face to face. Parents may need an appointment to do this, and can make one by ringing, calling or emailing the school. They can take a relation or friend to the appointment with them if they would like to do so.

All staff will make every effort to resolve the problem informally. Staff will make sure that they understand what a parent feels went wrong, and they will explain their own actions to the parent. The member of staff will ask what the parent would like the school to do to put things right. Of course, this does not mean that in every case the school will come round to the parents' point of view, but it will help parents and the school to understand both sides of the problem. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

What to do next

If a parent is dissatisfied with the teacher's response (or with the Headteacher's initial reaction if they have already been involved), they can make a complaint to the Headteacher. This should be made in writing.

If the complaint is about an action of the Headteacher personally, then a parent should refer their complaint to the Chair of Governors. Parents can contact the Chair of Governors by writing to: Chair of Governors, St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, Askham Richard, York, YO23 3PD.

Parents may also find it helpful to view the Local Authority General Complaints Procedure for City of York Schools, which is available on request from the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will ask to meet the parent(s) for a discussion of the problem. Again, a parent may take a friend or someone else with them if they wish. The Headteacher will conduct a full investigation of the complaint and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. Parents will receive a written response to their complaint.

Most problems can be resolved by the end of this stage.

If a complaint has not been resolved

If a parent is still not satisfied, they may wish to write to the chair of the governing body to ask for the referral of their complaint to the Governing Body. This must be received within five school days of the Headteacher's written response. It will then be heard by a group of governors who have no previous knowledge of the problem and so will be able to give it a fresh assessment. Parents will be invited to attend and speak to the panel at a meeting which the Headteacher will also attend. The Local Authority General Complaints Procedure for City of York Schools explains how these meetings operate.

Further action

Complaints about school problems are almost always settled within schools but in exceptional cases it may be possible to refer the problem to an outside body such as the Secretary of State for Education. Again there is more information on this in the Local Authority General Complaints Procedure for City of York Schools.

Headteacher: Mr Steve Jones

Chair of Governors: Mr Peter Cannings

Reviewed: May 2017

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