



## **St Anne's RC Primary School**

### **Complaints procedures**

Agreed by staff: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Agreed by governor committee: Not applicable

Agreed by full governing body: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Date for review:

#### **1 Aims**

- 1.1 To provide an effective means of complaint for the whole community of the school.
- 1.2 To ensure complaints are investigated quickly, within a set time, efficiently, fairly and sensitively.
- 1.3 To provide an additional means of monitoring and improving the school service.

#### **2 Definition of a complaint**

- 2.1 The clear expression of dissatisfaction by a person or persons, not employed by the school or on the Governing Body, with any interest in the school about the standard of teaching, conduct, actions or lack of action, of members of the teaching or non-teaching staff employed at the school or anyone else working under the direction of the head teacher.

#### **3 Further Guidance**

- 3.1 All complaints should be treated as confidential and only the members concerned with investigating the complaint should have access to the file.
- 3.2 Reference to the complaints procedure should be made in a variety of communications to ensure the whole school community is aware of the service.
- 3.3 The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a means to resolve complaints. It is important that every effort is made to resolve complaints at school level.
- 3.4 Many complaints can be dealt with informally (stage 1).
- 3.5 The Diocese of the Governor Support Service at the Local Authority will be able to advise and guide Governors on these procedures.

## **4 The Stages of the Complaints Procedure**

### **4.1 Stage 1: informal**

- 4.1.1 Complainant arranges to meet teacher or employee on informal basis at convenient time for both to discuss complaint.
- 4.1.2 Head teacher to be informed about meeting and consequences and may be asked to be involved in the discussion.
- 4.1.3 If resolves satisfactorily no further action is necessary.
- 4.1.4 If necessary the head teacher or designated member of staff investigates.
- 4.1.5 The head teacher or designated member of staff informs the complainant informing them that, if they are not satisfied, they have the right to refer their complaint to the Governing Body. Such complaints should be in writing, with date, name and address of complainant and should be received by the Governing Body within 10 days of the head teacher's notification.
- 4.1.6 In some cases it may not be appropriate to advise writing as this may over-formalise a situation which could still be resolved informally.
- 4.1.7 From this stage on, complaints are considered to be formal.

### **4.2 Stage 2: formal**

- 4.2.1 Complaints should be referred to the Chair of Governors.
- 4.2.2 On receiving the letter of complaint, the Chair of Governors should acknowledge the letter within 5 days and should attempt to respond, having carried out an investigation, within 10 days.
- 4.2.3 If this is not possible, the reasons for the delay, plus a revised response date should be communicated in writing by the Chair within 10 days.
- 4.2.4 During this time the Chair should investigate the complaint, which may include speaking with all parties, either individually or together.
- 4.2.5 The Chair should send a written summary of findings to the complainant within 10 working days including the right of appeal to the Governing Body's Complaints Committee.

- 4.2.6 If resolved satisfactorily no further action is necessary.
- 4.2.7 The complainant has 10 working days to request an investigation by the Complaints Committee. The Complaints Committee will ideally be three governors but may be two.

### **4.3 Stage 3: Complaints Hearing**

- 4.3.1 Minutes of the meeting should be recorded and kept on file.
- 4.3.2 The Chair will welcome the complainant and introduce all the parties present.
- 4.3.3 The complainant may be allowed to request support during the proceedings.
- 4.3.4 The Chair will explain the procedures to be followed.
- The complainant will be invited to explain the complaint.
  - The committee members will be invited to question the complainant as will the head teacher.
  - The head teacher will then be invited to make a statement and the panel and complainant will be invited to question him / her.
  - Any party has the right to call witnesses subject to the approval of the committee.
  - The head teacher will be invited to make a final statement.
  - The Chair will explain that the panel will consider their decision and that all parties will be informed within 10 working days.
- 4.3.11 The complaints committee will then:
- Reach a decision. This will preferably be unanimous but may be a majority decision;
  - Decide upon appropriate action;
  - Where appropriate, recommend changes to school systems to ensure complaints of a similar nature are not made again;
  - Send a written statement outlining the decision to all parties and explain the right to progress the complaint to the Local Authority

#### **4.4 Stages 4 and 5**

4.4.1 If the complainant is still not satisfied they may choose to refer to the local authority (stage 4) at which point LA policies will apply. They may further choose to refer to the Secretary of State (stage 5) at which point separate policies will apply.

### **5 Reporting complaints**

5.1 A list of formal complaints, the action taken, and the outcome, should be included in the head teacher's report to the Governors