

# Complaints Policy

## Introduction

In a caring school, such as ours, we wish to resolve any complaints, issues, disputes or problems, as informally as possible and in ways that are; fair, impartial, simple, confidential, non adversarial, fast, effective and appropriate.

Only if the complaint cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction will more formal action be needed.

## Stage one (Informal)

All complaints in relation to the day to day running of the school, the treatment of an individual pupil, or the implementation of school policies, should initially be made to the Head of House.

If the problem is not resolved after these initial meetings with the Head of House then the matter will be referred to either the Assistant Head Pastoral/Deputy Head Pastoral who will convene a meeting with the Parent/Guardian to discuss the issue. This meeting may also involve the Class Teacher/Form Tutor, Head of Department or Head of House.

If the problem is still unresolved then parents will be invited to meet the Head Teacher. Hopefully any complaint can be settled at this stage. You may contact the Head Teacher through his P.A. who will make an appointment for you.

However, if the Parent/Guardian feels that a satisfactory outcome has not been achieved they may move to stage 2 in the Complaints Policy.

## Stage 2 (Formal)

If the matter is not fully resolved, it may be referred to the Governing Body for their consideration.

You may contact the governors by putting your complaint in writing and sending it to the school addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body, stating:

- i. The nature of the complaint;
- ii. The name of the pupil involved; and
- iii. The class or group to which the pupil belongs.

The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will arrange to meet with the individual or group himself or with a Panel of the Governors to hear the complaint. The Parent/Guardian will be informed in writing by the Clerk to the Governing body within ten working days.

Parents must make the governing body aware of any disability or special needs which would affect their ability to attend the meeting. It is noted that provision must be made for any Parent/Guardian or student with English as their second language (e.g. an interpreter) or covered by DDA.

If a meeting with a panel of the Governors is required then it will be organised by the Clerk to the Governing body at a mutually convenient time for all parties, including the Parent/Guardian, but within 10 working days of being contacted by the Chair of Governors. The Parent/Guardian will have the right to be accompanied by another person.

In the interim the Chair of Governors, acting as Complaints Convenor, will interview the Head Teacher and any staff involved. Also the Parent/Guardian will be interviewed separately. The Chair of Governors will prepare a written report, which with the notes of previous meetings, will be forwarded to the Clerk for presentation to the Panel.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Panel

### The role of the Clerk to the Governing Body

- Set the date, time and venue of the hearing, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible
- Collate any written material and send it to the parties in advance of the hearing
- Meet and welcome the parties as they arrive at the hearing
- Record the proceedings
- Notify all parties of the panel's decision within five working days

### The Role of the Chair of the Governing Body

- Check that the correct procedure has been followed
- Notify the Clerk to arrange a Panel
- Interview relevant parties and prepare written information for the Panel

The Chair of the Panel will be the Vice Chair of the complaints sub committee of the Governing body who has a key role, ensuring that:

- The remit of the panel is explained to the parties and each party has the opportunity of putting their case without undue interruption
- Key findings of fact are made
- Parents and others who may not be used to speaking at such a hearing are put at ease.
- The hearing is conducted in an informal manner with each party treating the other with respect and courtesy
- The panel is open minded and acting independently
- No member of the panel has a vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure.

## Making a complaint about SEN provision

### Stage 1 - Speak to the school (informal)

If your child has SEN and your complaint is about the support your child is receiving, contact school and ask to speak to the SENCo. If you are still unhappy, then you may request to speak to the Headteacher. You may contact the Headteacher through his P.A. who will make an appointment for you.

If you still feel that a satisfactory outcome has not been reached, you may make a formal complaint by following the school's complaints procedure (Stage 2)

### Stage 2 – Complaints Policy

Cardinal Hume Catholic School's complaints policy can be found at [www.cardinalhume.com](http://www.cardinalhume.com)

You may also contact the Education Funding and Skills Agency.

If you need confidential advice and support, you should speak to your local parent partnership service (Gateshead SENDIAS)