



# Complaints Policy

## Complaints Procedure for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Hallam

**Because God calls us to fullness of life in Christ we provide varied exciting opportunities for children to achieve highly.**

God invites us to promise **to keep everyone learning.**

**Because God calls us to love our neighbour we respect and include each other and develop the skills of confidence, resilience, independence, empathy and understanding.**

God invites us to promise **to keep everyone included.**

**Because God calls us to live as faithful members of the community we respect the world around us.**

God invites us to promise **to look after the world around us.**

**Because God shows us the best way to live we get to know ourselves and learn how to be safe.**

God invites us to promise **to keep everyone safe.**

**Because God calls us to be like him we get to know ourselves and learn to respect the truth.**

God invites us to promise **to be honest."**

Approved by	Approval date	Review date
Full Governing Body.	19.10.17	Autumn 2019

### INTRODUCTION

At Holy Family we operate an open door policy and we warmly welcome parents into school if they'd like to discuss their children's behaviour or progress.

As in any organisation or community, misunderstandings can from time to time arise which may lead to a parent wishing to express some concern. A concern is not a complaint and should not be treated as such by the parent or school. Only a very small number of concerns raised by parents need to be investigated using the formal procedure.

When concerns are addressed and resolved there should be no need for a formal complaint. An initial request for action or an enquiry is not a complaint. However, failure to respond could give rise to a complaint.

Concerns will be written down and recorded by the class teacher, or member of staff dealing with the concern. Actions will be agreed to resolve the issue, or monitor the concern for future action.

This policy explains what parents can do if a query or concern that has been raised with the Head Teacher and has not been responded to in a manner that satisfies the parent.

A number of other procedures already exist. There are special arrangements for dealing with the following matters, which must not be dealt with under the complaints procedure.

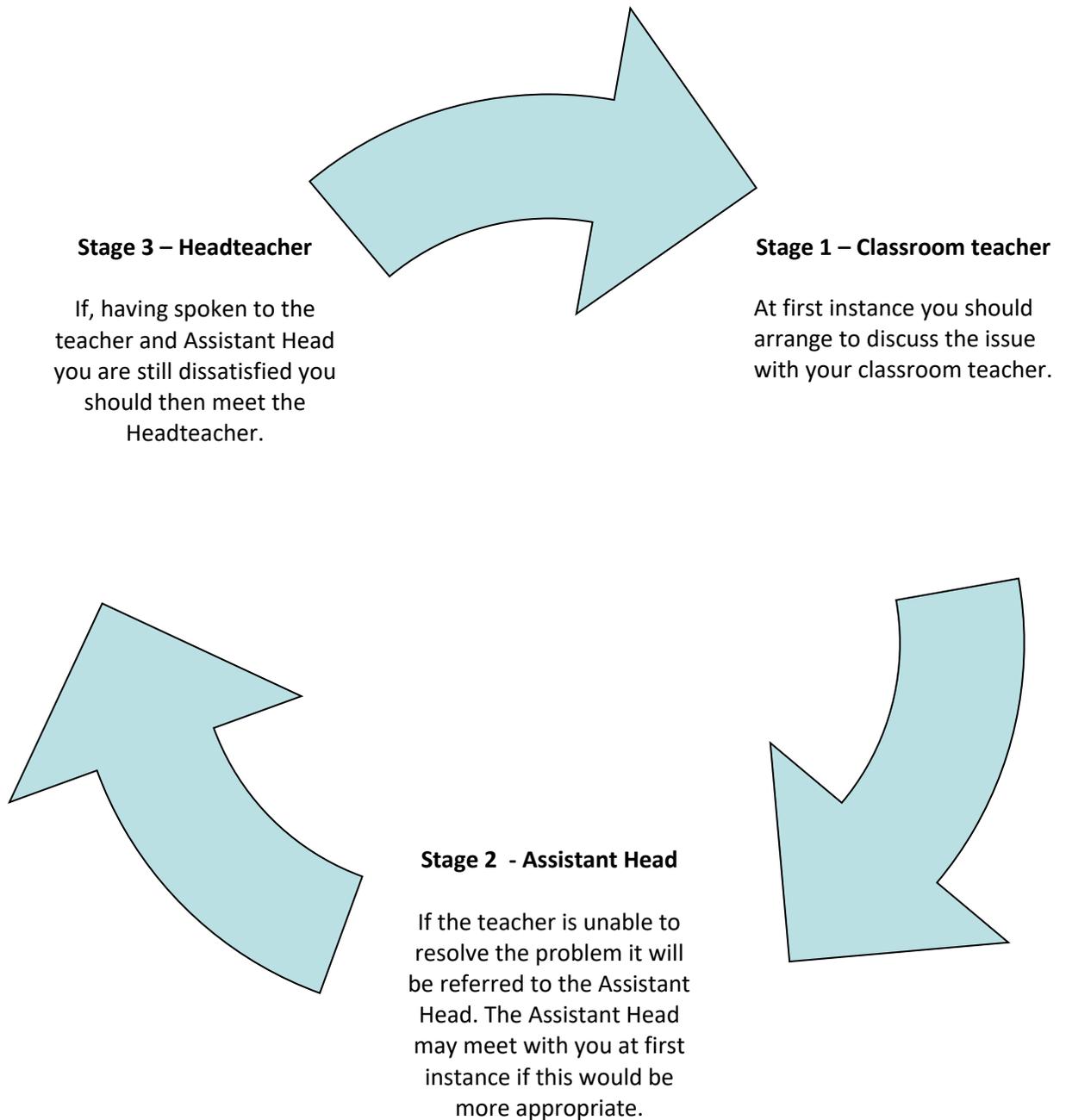
The existing special arrangements are for dealing with:

- Complaints about what your child is taught at school (the National Curriculum), the school's charging policy, religious education and collective worship, and the school's provision of information.  
(The school's prospectus will give you details of the arrangements. In each case however, you should first discuss the problem with the Head Teacher.)
- Appeals against decisions about your child's special educational needs.  
(A Tribunal has been established to deal with complaints of this nature. The school or Local Authority will be able to give you details.)
- If you are not offered a place in the school of your choice, or if your child is suspended or excluded from school.  
(The School will tell you how to appeal if these situations arise.)
- If you think your child has been given an incorrect grade in a public examination.  
(You can ask the school to question the result with the examinations board)

**In all other cases you should follow the procedures outlined in this leaflet.**

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### **FIRST -THE SCHOOL**



**Stage 1:** If you are worried about something concerning your child at school you should first ask to discuss the difficulty with your child's teacher. You can do this by phoning the school, writing a letter or making an appointment to meet your child's teacher.

**Stage 2:** It may be suggested to you by your child's teacher that it would be more appropriate for you to talk with another senior member of staff, in which case you should do this.

**Stage 3:** If however, having spoken with a teacher or for example, the Deputy Head, you are still dissatisfied you should then meet the Head Teacher.

## **SECOND – THE GOVERNORS**

Most complaints will have been resolved by this stage but, if you are still unhappy, the next step is a formal complaint to the Governing Body.

You should now put the complaint in writing. You can use the form at the back of this leaflet or you can write a letter if you prefer. If this is difficult ask a friend to help.

Send the completed form or your letter to the Chairman of Governors at the school. Keep a copy of the form or letter as it may help you later. The governors will let you know who will investigate your complaint and how they will deal with it.

Normally about three governors will be involved. They will hold a meeting to discuss your complaint. The meeting will usually be held within 20 days of the day the Chairman receives your form or letter.

You will be invited to go to the meeting so that you can talk about your complaint in more detail. You can take a friend or representative with you if you wish. You will be given at least 3 day's notice of the meeting. Every effort will be made to see that the date and time is convenient for you.

## **THIRD – THE DIOCESE**

If you are still dissatisfied, or if you do not feel you can complain to the Head Teacher or the governors, you can ask the Diocese to carry out an investigation.

You should write to:

The Schools' Adviser  
The Hallam Pastoral Centre  
St Charles' Street  
Sheffield  
S9 3WU

It will help if you can enclose your original complaint form or letter and any other papers.

The Schools' Adviser will appoint someone to investigate your complaint. It will not be a person who has a connection with the school as, for example, a governor or teacher.

The complaint will normally be investigated within 20 school days. The person appointed to carry out the investigation will arrange to meet with you. You will be given at least 3 day's notice of the meeting and you can take a friend or representative with you.

The Diocesan representative will eventually write to you to tell you the result of the investigation. The Diocese may then make recommendations to the governors.

### **THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

If you are still not happy you can address your complaint to:

The Secretary of State  
Department of Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
LONDON  
SW11P 3BT

You should put your complaint in writing and enclose copies of your original complaint and any other relevant papers.

### **FORM OF COMPLAINT**

When you have completed this form, take it or send it to the Chairman of the Governing Body of your child's school. (Name and address are available from the school secretary).

Please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary

1. **Name** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. **Telephone number: at home** \_\_\_\_\_ **at work:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Name of School** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Brief details of the problem** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. **To what date or period of time does your complaint relate?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. **To whom have you already complained informally and when?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. **Please give details of any more information you have to back up your complaint, such as letters or reports. If you cannot send photocopies, please send your original which will be photocopied and returned to you.**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. **Do you have a solution that you wish to suggest?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_