



## ST THOMAS A BECKET R C SCHOOL

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

<b>DATE OF LAST REVIEW:</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 2018</b>
<b>AGREED BY GOVERNORS:</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2018</b>
<b>SHARED WITH ALL STAFF:</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2018</b>
<b>FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>ANNUALLY</b>
<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2019</b>

## Mission Statement

St Thomas a Becket School is a primary school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark.

The aim of the school is to offer excellence of education in accordance with the teaching of the Church and to value and develop each child's potential in a community in which every member is fully respected.

We try to ensure that this is done by

- Praying together
- Valuing the experiences of each member of the community
- Being a caring, forgiving community
- Living and working and playing together
- By encouraging the children to achieve the best of their ability

## **Introduction**

The good relationships we enjoy with our parents mean that any concerns regarding school matters are usually resolved at an early stage.

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them at all times honestly and fairly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed in a confidential and sensitive manner and try to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

## **Informal Stage**

Complaints/concerns should be put in writing or discussed with the class teacher. If the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been resolved the complaint should be taken to Stage 1.

### **Stage 1**

An appointment should be made to discuss the complaint with the Headteacher. Where appropriate, the Headteacher may need to collate data or relevant facts before taking action or making a decision.

### **Stage 2**

If, following a meeting with the Headteacher, parents/carers feel that their concerns/complaints require further attention then they may choose to refer the matter to the school's Governing Body who will investigate the matter. In this instance, parents may write to the Chair of Governors at the school address or via the Clerk to Governors at the Civic Offices in Bexleyheath.

A letter of acknowledgement from the Chair of Governors will be sent within five days.

The formal complaint will be investigated by the Chair of Governors and a reply sent within 15 school days of receiving the complaint.

### Stage 3

If the complaint is still not resolved, parents/carers may request that the matter be referred to a Complaints Panel. This must be done in writing to the school within 10 school days of receiving the response at Stage 2.

A Complaints Panel (consisting of three Governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint) will set a date to meet as soon as is practicable but no longer than 15 school days from receiving the request.

Parents/carers will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a friend or partner if you wish, to put your case. The Headteacher will be given the same opportunities.

The Complaints Panel will communicate their findings in writing to all parties within 10 school days.

The Complaints Panel can:

- ❶ Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.
- ❷ Uphold the complaint in whole or in part.
- ❸ Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint.

- Recommend changes to the school's system or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The decision of the panel is final.

### **Local Authority**

The Local Authority has no statutory power to investigate complaints beyond giving advice or making recommendations. There is no right to appeal to the Director of Education or to members of the Council.

### **Independent Review**

In the rare circumstance that complainant remains dissatisfied with the response by the Governing body, he/she would have the right to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education.

We would advise parents that, unless the School and/or the Local Authority have behaved unreasonably or not to have followed their own procedures, there is likely to be little further action that can be taken as Governing Bodies are empowered to deal with many issues without reference to either the Local Authority or the Secretary of State.