



All Saints' Church of England Primary School

Complaints Policy 2026-2027

OUR VISION

Our vision is to be a nurturing and inclusive school, proudly reflecting the diversity of our community, where every child is treated as an individual and no matter what their starting point will achieve their true potential within a safe and secure environment.

By the end of their journey, we want our children to be respectful, resilient role-models, having a self-belief in themselves and their abilities, ready to go from strength to strength.

Our Values

All Saints' has an ethos built around our core Christian values of Compassion, Koinonia (community) and Love. Our keys aims are linked to scripture (See full mission statement), culminating in our strap line of '*Growing Stronger Together in God's Love.*'

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Compassion | Be kind and compassionate to one another, learning from our mistakes and forgiving others for theirs. |
| Koinonia (community) | Value and celebrate diversity, welcoming families from all faiths and backgrounds. |
| Love | The love within our school is one of family and friendship, enabling each child to grow and flourish. |

1. Vision and Ethos

At All Saints' Church of England Primary School we aim to provide a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child is valued and supported to achieve their full potential.

Our school community is guided by our Christian values of:

Compassion, Koinonia (community) and Love

Our vision is that children grow into respectful, resilient individuals who believe in themselves and their abilities.

As a Christian school, we aim to resolve concerns with honesty, openness and respect, reflecting the teaching of Matthew 18:15–17, which encourages dialogue and reconciliation.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The school is committed to dealing with concerns and complaints in a fair, open and timely manner.

This policy explains:

- how concerns and complaints can be raised
- how complaints will be investigated
- the stages involved in resolving complaints
- how decisions are communicated
- how complainants may escalate their concerns if they remain dissatisfied.

The procedure follows guidance from the **Department for Education (DfE)** and the **Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE)** and meets the requirements of **Section 29 of the Education Act 2002**.

3. Who Can Make a Complaint

This complaints procedure is **not limited to parents or carers of children attending the school**.

A complaint may be made by:

- parents or carers
- pupils

- members of the local community
- any person who has concerns about the provision of facilities or services at the school.

Where a complaint is made on behalf of another person, the school may request written consent before proceeding.

4. Concerns and Complaints

It is important to distinguish between a **concern** and a **complaint**.

A **concern** may be defined as:

An expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurance is sought.

A **complaint** may be defined as:

An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through informal discussion. The school encourages parents and carers to raise concerns as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly.

5. Principles for Handling Complaints

The school will ensure that complaints are handled in a way that is:

- fair and impartial
- respectful and confidential
- transparent
- timely and responsive.

The school will aim to:

- resolve issues at the earliest possible stage
 - listen carefully to all parties involved
 - investigate concerns thoroughly
 - learn from complaints to improve practice.
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6. Scope of This Procedure

This procedure covers complaints about the school's provision of services.

The policy **does not cover matters which have separate statutory procedures**, including:

- admissions
- exclusions
- safeguarding matters
- statutory assessment of special educational needs
- staff discipline or grievances
- whistleblowing.

Separate policies apply to these matters.

7. Time Limits

Complaints should normally be raised **within three months of the incident**, or within three months of the last incident in a series.

The school may consider complaints outside this time limit where **exceptional circumstances apply**, such as:

- serious illness or incapacity
 - bereavement or significant personal circumstances
 - an ongoing safeguarding or police investigation
 - new evidence becoming available
 - delays caused by the school.
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8. Anonymous Complaints

The school will **not normally investigate anonymous complaints**.

However, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors may decide that an anonymous complaint should be investigated depending on the seriousness of the issue.

9. The Complaints Procedure

The complaints procedure has **three stages**.

Stage 1 – Informal Concern

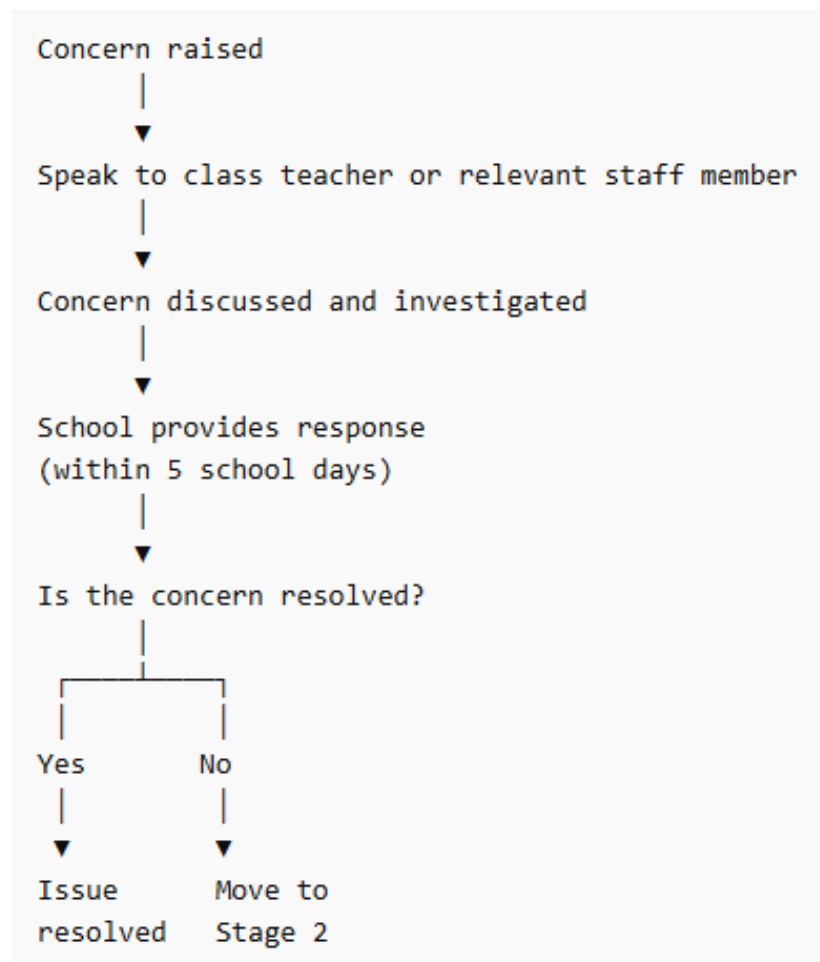
Most concerns can be resolved informally.

Concerns should initially be raised with:

- the child's class teacher
- an appropriate member of staff
- the Headteacher.

A response will normally be provided within **5 school days**.

If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, the complainant may move to Stage 2.



Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If a concern remains unresolved, a **formal complaint may be submitted**.

Formal complaints must be made **in writing using the school's official complaints form**, available from the school office or school website.

The complaint should be sent to:

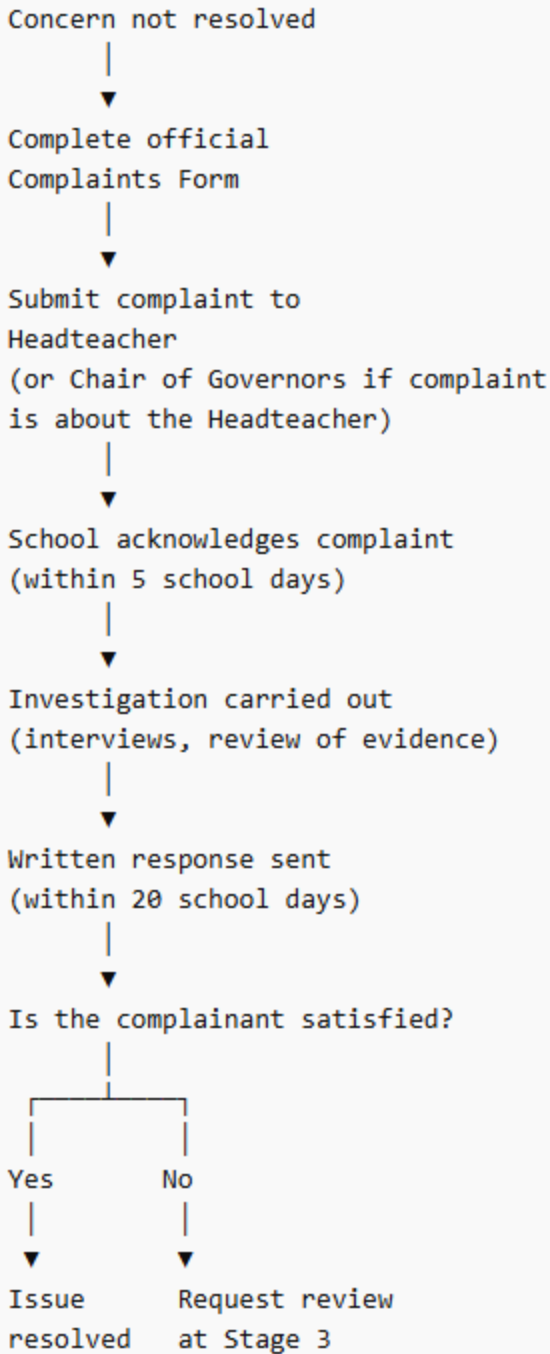
- the **Headteacher**, unless the complaint concerns the Headteacher.

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, it should be addressed to the **Chair of Governors** via the school office.

The school will:

- acknowledge the complaint within **5 school days**
- investigate the complaint
- provide a written response within **20 school days**.

If additional time is required to complete the investigation, the complainant will be informed and provided with an updated timescale.



Stage 3 – Governing Body Complaints Panel

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they may request that the complaint be reviewed by a **Complaints Panel of the Governing Body**.

Requests must be submitted **within 10 school days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

Before a hearing is arranged, the governing body will review whether there are grounds for appeal.

A panel hearing will normally be arranged where:

- the correct procedure was not followed at Stage 2
- new and significant evidence has come to light
- the Stage 2 decision is not supported by the evidence
- a significant procedural error occurred.

If the governing body determines that these grounds have not been met, the complainant will be informed in writing that the Stage 2 decision represents the school's final response.

Where a panel hearing is arranged:

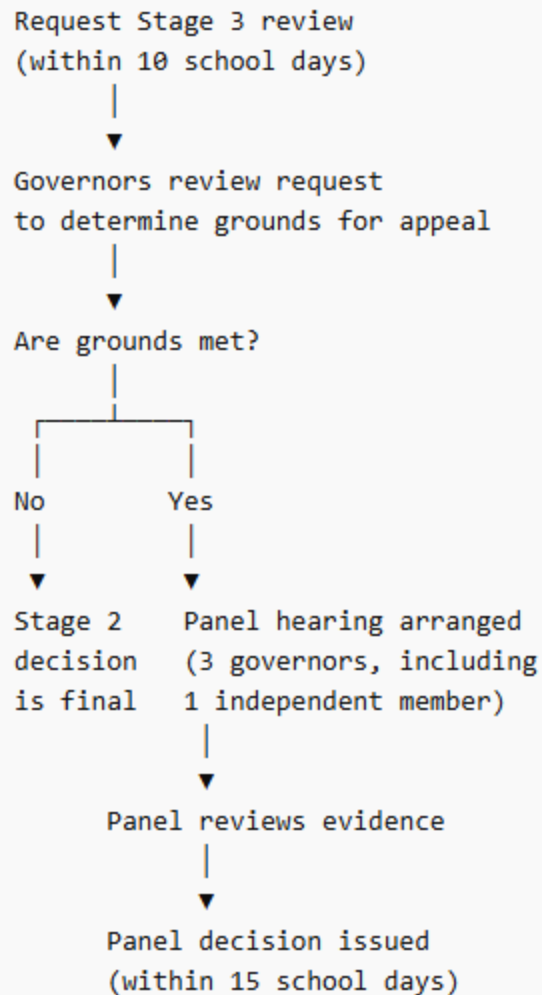
- the panel will consist of **three governors who have not been involved in the complaint**
- the complainant may bring a friend or relative for support.

The panel may:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part
- dismiss the complaint.

The panel's decision will be communicated in writing within **15 school days**.

This is the **final stage of the school's complaints procedure**.



10. Escalation to the Department for Education

If the complainant believes the school has not handled their complaint in accordance with this procedure or has acted unlawfully or unreasonably, they may refer the matter to the **Department for Education (DfE)**.

The DfE will not reinvestigate the complaint itself but will consider whether the school followed the correct procedures and complied with education legislation.

Still dissatisfied?



Contact Department for Education
(DfE)



DfE reviews whether the school
followed the complaints procedure
correctly

11. Persistent or Serial Complaints

If a complainant attempts to reopen an issue after the complaint's procedure has been completed, the school will inform them that the matter is closed.

Further correspondence on the same issue may not receive a response.

The school will ensure that any **new complaints are considered separately and fairly.**

12. Vexatious Complaints and Unreasonable Behaviour

The school recognises that the vast majority of complaints are made in good faith and are handled respectfully and constructively. However, in a small number of cases a complainant's behaviour may become unreasonable, persistent, or vexatious.

While the school will always seek to respond with patience and understanding, staff and governors have the right to work without harassment, intimidation or unreasonable demands on their time and resources.

This section outlines how the school will manage complaints where behaviour becomes unreasonable.

Definitions

Vexatious Complaints

A complaint may be considered vexatious where the complainant's behaviour is obsessive, persistent, harassing, or repetitious and where the complaint:

- has already been fully investigated and addressed
- is pursued without any new evidence
- demands unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes
- is malicious, knowingly false, or intended to cause disruption.

Unreasonable Behaviour

Unreasonable behaviour is behaviour which hinders the consideration of complaints or the core work of the school.

Examples may include (but are not limited to):

- refusing to clearly explain the complaint or desired outcome
- repeatedly contacting multiple members of staff or governors about the same issue
- refusing to follow the stages of the school's complaints procedure
- excessive or repeated correspondence that is disproportionate to the issue
- introducing irrelevant information during the complaints process
- refusing to accept the outcome of a complaint after the process has been completed
- making unreasonable demands on staff time through frequent or lengthy contact
- publishing inaccurate or misleading information about the school
- abusive, threatening or aggressive communication with staff or governors
- recording meetings without permission or sharing confidential information publicly.

No genuine complaint will be dismissed solely because of the complainant's manner.

Managing Unreasonable Behaviour

Where behaviour becomes unreasonable or vexatious, the school may take steps to manage communication in order to protect staff and ensure the effective operation of the school.

Initial Warning

Before any restrictions are applied, the Headteacher (or a delegated senior leader) will normally:

- explain why the behaviour is considered unreasonable
- request that the behaviour changes

- warn that restrictions may be introduced if the behaviour continues.
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Applying Communication Restrictions

If the behaviour continues, the school may implement reasonable measures to manage contact. These may include:

- requiring communication through a single point of contact
- limiting the communication channels that can be used
- setting reasonable limits on the frequency of contact
- refusing requests for meetings
- requiring meetings to be attended by a second member of staff and formally minuted
- requiring communication through a third party such as an advocate or adviser.

Where restrictions are applied, the individual will be informed in writing and the arrangements will be reviewed periodically.

These measures do not prevent an individual from raising new complaints, provided they follow the complaints procedure and comply with any communication arrangements in place.

Immediate Restrictions

In circumstances where behaviour is abusive, threatening or poses a risk to staff or pupils, the school may take immediate action, including:

- asking the individual to leave the school premises
 - contacting the police where appropriate
 - restricting access to the school site.
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Barring from School Premises

Although schools provide a public service, they remain private premises. The Headteacher and Governing Body have a responsibility to ensure the school remains a safe environment.

In exceptional circumstances, an individual may be barred from entering the school premises where their behaviour presents a risk to staff, pupils or the wider school community.

Where this action is considered necessary:

- the individual will be informed in writing
 - they will be given an opportunity to present their views
 - the decision will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors or a committee of governors.
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13. Record Keeping

The school will maintain a written record of all complaints including:

- the nature of the complaint
- the stage at which the complaint was resolved
- the outcome of the complaint
- any actions taken.

Records will be kept securely and confidentially in accordance with:

- the Data Protection Act 2018
 - the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
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14. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will keep a log of complaints received by the school.

The Governing Body will monitor the operation of the complaints procedure to ensure that it is effective and fair.

The policy will be **reviewed annually or sooner if required.**
