



PRIORY SCHOOL

EDGBASTON

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

Mission Statement

Priory School is a thriving Independent Catholic school which welcomes those of all faiths and none.

We love, live and learn joyfully as children of God.

In partnership with parents or guardians, we provide a caring community with high standards of teaching and learning, enabling all pupils to achieve success.

Approved by Risk & Compliance Committee 19 January 2018

1. The governors and staff of Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.
2. The staff, governors and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.
3. To meet the needs of our school community all our policies, including this one, can be made available in different formats such as different font sizes or styles, colour or alternative languages.
4. The governing body understands that it has responsibility for ensuring the effective oversight of this policy and will assess, evaluate and review as necessary.

Response to Mission Statement

In line with the values of our mission statement and our aims we work in partnership with parents to provide a caring community with high standards of teaching and learning. We keep parents informed regularly about their child's progress and are available to talk to them about any concerns as soon as they arise.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Priory School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. We operate an 'Open Door' Policy, which means that we actively encourage parents to share any concerns, no matter how small, with the management team, if they are not being effectively resolved. Very, very occasionally, however, involved parties do not feel that concerns / complaints are being effectively resolved. In this rare instance, they can expect their concern / complaint to be treated by the School in accordance with this Procedure. This policy also includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (Priory Poppets, Nursery and Reception classes).

Please note that any complaint received beyond three months after the pupil has left the school will not be considered.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

- As described above, it is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and **informally**.
- If parents have a complaint they should normally contact their son/daughter's Form Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Form Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him / her to consult the Head of Department, Head of Faculty, Senior Management or Head.
- Complaints made directly to the Head of Department, Head of Faculty, Senior Management or Head will usually be referred to the relevant Form Teacher unless the Head of Department, Head of Faculty, Senior Management or Head deems it appropriate for him/her to deal with the matter personally.
- The Form Teacher or whoever is handling the complaint will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working school days¹ during the term and as soon as practicable during the holidays. The person handling the complaint will make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within 3 full school weeks or in the event that the Form Teacher or whoever is handling the complaint and the parent fail to reach

¹ Working school days are defined as being from the hours of 8.20 – 4pm during term time.

a satisfactory resolution then parents may proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage 2 of this Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should **put their complaint in writing** to the Head. Acknowledgment of receipt of the formal complaint will normally be made within 2 working school days or as soon as practicable during the holidays. The Head will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
- In most cases, the Head will meet or speak to the parents concerned, normally within 10 working **school days** of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head to carry out further investigations.
- The Head will **keep written records** of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Head will also give reasons for his/her decision.
- The whole process, including final feedback to parents after further investigation should this be necessary, will normally be **within 15 working school days**.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this procedure by writing outlining the grounds for their dissatisfaction to the Head.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred by the Head to the Chair of the Governing Council who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint at Stage 3 **within 2 working school days** and as soon as practicable during the holidays and will call a hearing of the Complaints Panel.
- The matter will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration. The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and day to day running of the school. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Chair of the Governing Council, who will then schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally **within 10 working school days**.

- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 2 days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may attend the hearing and be accompanied by one other person. This may be a relative, or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.
- The Head also has the right to attend the Hearing and put his/her view to the Panel.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts it considers relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within 10 working school days of the Hearing. The Panel will write to, or send an email to, the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it within 5 working school days of the decision being made. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the complainant, the Head, the Governing Council and, where relevant, the person complained about. A copy of the findings will be kept on file at the school within the Complaints Log.
- The Panel's findings will also be available for inspection on the school premises by the Head and Governing Council.
- A written record is kept of all complaints that are made and action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld)
- Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The number of complaints registered under this formal procedure in the previous academic year 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-15 is: zero.

In 2015-16 there have been two complaints (one complainant).

In 2016-17 the number of complaints registered under this formal procedure is: zero.

In 2017-18, as at November 2017, the number of complaints registered under this formal procedure is: zero.

Early Years Foundation Stage Complaints Procedure

Priory School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. We operate an 'Open Door' Policy, which means that we actively encourage parents to share any concerns, no matter how small, with the management team, if they are not being effectively resolved. Very, very occasionally, however, involved parties do not feel that concerns / complaints are being effectively resolved. In this rare instance, they can expect their concern / complaint to be treated by the School in accordance with our School Complaints Procedure which can be found on the website. This policy also includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (Priory Poppets, Nursery and Reception classes).

In the first instance you should speak to your child's key worker or room leader about any concerns. If you need further assistance please speak to Miss Silver our Early Years Manager.

1. A complainant will be notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days of receiving the complaint.
2. Priory School will provide OFSTED and ISI, on request, with a written record of all complaints made during any specified period and the action which was taken as a result of each complaint.
3. Stages 1, 2 and 3 as above in line with the rest of the school.

Alternatively, a parent can contact OFSTED and/or the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

At
OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

The telephone number for OFSTED Complaints Department is:-
0300 123 1231

Priory School will keep a record of complaints on file for a period of three years.

Monitoring and Review

The curriculum is constantly being reviewed to take account of educational initiatives and respond to the future priorities of the school.

This policy will be monitored by the Head on a regular basis.

Reviewed by the Risk and Compliance Committee.