



## Holy Trinity CE School.

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### COMPLAINTS AND CONCILIATION PROCEDURE SUMMARY

#### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in July 2018.

It is due for review – *July 2019*

Signature .....

Date .....

Head Teacher

Signature .....

Date .....

Chair of Governors

### COMPLAINTS AND CONCILIATION PROCEDURE SUMMARY

The Governors of Holy Trinity CE School have made safeguarding an essential priority and are committed to make sure that the safeguarding of their children remains central to their work. For this reason, the principles of excellent safeguarding practice are interwoven within the Christian culture of Holy Trinity and every aspect of the school's work. This policy supports this commitment to safeguarding and should be read in conjunction with all school policies as appropriate.

It is every person's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and it remains a principal concern to everyone within the school community.

### **Introduction and Contextual Information**

Holy Trinity CE Primary School has adopted the model procedures for dealing with school based complaints published by Hertfordshire Children School and Families (CSF). Full details of the model procedures can be found at [www.thegrid.org.uk](http://www.thegrid.org.uk). Upon written request to the Clerk to the Governing Body, the School will provide a copy of these procedures.

This complaints and conciliation procedure demonstrates that the School recognises its accountability to parents/carers or community users and accepts the need to provide redress in cases if and when the School has acted inappropriately. It helps the School to ensure the highest standards of service. We work in partnership with parents/carers and encourage parents/carers to discuss issues that arise at an early stage to avoid escalation to complaint level. Most issues and concerns can be resolved in this way. The following procedures are used when this process does not resolve a matter.

In the event of a complaint of a serious nature such as, for example, financial misconduct or child abuse, the School procedure may be suspended and the agreed Local Authority procedures followed.

Parents/carers or community users also have statutory rights of complaint. The rights of parents/carers or community users to complain about aspects of the curriculum are set out in DES Circular 1/89: 'Education Reform Act Local Arrangements for the Consideration of Complaints'. These, however, refer only to complaints about the content of the National Curriculum, Religious Education and Collective Worship, approved examination courses, the provision of statutory information, and charging policies. The INCo or Head Teacher can advise parents/carers of rights regarding children with Statements of Special Educational Need.

### **HOW A COMPLAINT IS DEALT WITH**

#### **Stage 1 – Conciliation following a complaint (Informal Stage)**

If a parent/carer or community user is dissatisfied with an aspect of the work of the School they should contact the School by telephone, in writing or in person by prior appointment.

The Head Teacher or another member of staff, will meet with the parent/carer or community user, or telephone them usually within five working days to establish the nature of the complaint. Every effort will be made to listen to the complaint to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right and to resolve matters informally.

On some occasions a parent/carer or community user may wish to discuss a matter with the Chair of the Governing Body on an informal basis. The parent/carer or community user should be asked to write to the Chair of the Governing Body c/o the Clerk to the Governing Body at the School. The Chair of the Governing Body, or a designated Governor, will then discuss the matter with the parent/carer or community user in person or on the telephone, where possible within five working days. Following their discussion, the Chair of Governors will raise the matter with the Head Teacher and respond to the parent/carer or community user. The complainant can expect a written response to normally be returned within five working days.

The School response will also state that in the event of a parent/carer or community user being dissatisfied with the School's response, there is a right to make a formal complaint to the Governing Body.

#### **Stage 2 – A Formal Complaint to the Governing Body**

Parents/carers or community users who are dissatisfied with the School's response may wish to complain formally to the Governing Body.

The complainant should put their complaint in writing and address it to the Chair of Governors c/o the Clerk to the Governing Body at the School. When the Chair of Governors receives a complaint, it will be acknowledged in writing normally within five working days and a commitment made that the complaint will be investigated and the outcome of the investigation notified to the complainant. Where necessary, the nature of the complaint may be confirmed through discussion with the parent/carer or community user. Complaints must be received within twenty eight calendar days of the event or incident.

A summary of the process undertaken, and the outcome of the investigation, will be provided in writing to both the complainant as soon as is practicable. Should there be any delay in providing a response to the complaint then the complainant will be advised of the reason for the delay in writing by the Clerk to the Governors. Any recommendations for future action will also be shared with all parties at that time.

The complainant will also be advised that the Conciliation and Complaints division of the Local Authority may be contacted. They will also be informed that in the event of dissatisfaction with the outcome of the Governors' investigation they may refer the matter to the Local Authority (if relating to Special Education Needs, National Curriculum or Collective Worship) or the Secretary of State at the DfE (for other general matters).

In most cases it is expected that complaints will be satisfactorily resolved following formal complaint to the Governing body. However, if the complainant is still not satisfied that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved, Stage 3 of the complaint is activated.

### **Stage 3 of a Complaint**

Complainants can take any unresolved matter further either to the Local Authority, or the Secretary of State. If sent to the LA, this should be in writing to the Head of Conciliation and Appeals (CAU). The LA will aim to respond with the outcome of any investigation within twenty five working days, wherever possible. A copy of the outcome will be sent to the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher.

NOTE: Holy Trinity is a Voluntary Aided School and therefore there is no third stage of complaint to the Local Authority for the following:

- Denominational religious education
- Collective Worship

In case of the need to continue to the third stage of complaint, complainants must write to the Director of Education, Diocese of St Albans, Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans, Herts AL1 1HE

If the complaint is about general matters that are the responsibility of the Governing body there is no stage three investigation by the Local Authority. For the vast majority of cases, there is no right of appeal to the Local Authority beyond the School's Governing body.

Parents/carers have got the right to complain to the Secretary of State for Education (Education Act 1996) if they believe the Local Authority or the School Governing Body is acting or proposing to act unreasonably, or is failing to carry out a statutory duty.

#### Useful addresses:

Chair of the Governing Body

c/o Holy Trinity CE School  
Longlands Close  
Crossbrook Street  
Waltham Cross  
Herts EN8 8LU

Clerk to the Governing Body

c/o Holy Trinity CE School  
Longlands Close  
Crossbrook Street  
Waltham Cross  
Herts EN8 8LU

Head of Conciliation and Complaints

Children, Schools and Families  
Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Hertford  
Herts SG13 8DF

**Procedures may be changed as appropriate by the School.**