



**Christ Church CE Primary School, Cressage**  
**Learning, Listening, Living**  
**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and other stakeholders. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place to respond to complaints.

In accordance with Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 all local authority (LA) maintained schools must have and make available a procedure to deal with all complaints relating to their school and to any community facilities or services that the school provides.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally without the need to invoke formal procedures. It is our aim to resolve issues informally whenever possible by aiming to be as open and approachable as possible with all our stakeholders and by responding swiftly to concerns before they get to the stage of a complaint.

## **AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

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.

## **THE DIFFERENCE 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 reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016. (DfE January 2016)

We take informal concerns/complaints seriously and hope that this proactive approach prevents concerns escalating into a formal complaint.

## **HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN**

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education we are providing they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

If a member of the public has a concern they can raise it either with the school office or with the headteacher.

Complaints about the headteacher should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors or any individual governor should be brought to the attention of the Clerk to the Governing Body.

## **HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss their concern or complaint with the headteacher.

It is hoped that the majority of complaints can be resolved informally either by raising them verbally, in person or over the telephone, or by putting them in writing, given or sent to the school, when they can be discussed as soon as possible at a mutually agreed time, and a satisfactory explanation given or resolution speedily implemented.

Complaints that cannot be resolved informally will be dealt with in accordance with the following procedure:



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- Acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant within five working days (i.e. school term days)
- The complainant will be given the name and telephone number of the person dealing with the complaint
- A full response will be sent within twenty working days (i.e. school term days) or if a complete answer still cannot be given the complainant will be told what is being done to investigate the complaint and how long this is likely to take
- The complainant will be told if their complaint has to be dealt with under a special procedure.

Should the complainant wish to put their complaint in writing the complaint form at the end of this document may be used. However, school will accept the complaint in any written form the complainant prefers.

**WHERE TO GO IF NOT SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME**

Complainants not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint dealt with by the headteacher may request that their complaint be considered by the chair of governors. You can write to The Chair of Governors c/o Christ Church CE Primary School, Sheinton Road, Cressage, Shropshire, SY5 6DH.

The Chair of Governors will arrange for the complaint to be looked into. Even at this stage it is hoped that the complaint can be resolved informally and the Chair will attempt to do this if at all possible.

If the complainant feels that their complaint still hasn't been resolved the complainant needs to write to the Chair of the Governors' Complaints Committee. The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the letter within 10 working days and would ask the clerk of the committee to convene a Complaints Committee meeting. This meeting will, whenever possible, take place within 15 working days (excluding school holidays) of dispatch of the acknowledgement letter unless a longer period (e.g. to collate information) is necessary, in which case the chair must inform the complainant the reason for the delay. The school will give the complainant at least three working days' notice of the meeting.

**THE REMIT OF THE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or part;
- Decide upon the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- Recommend any changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

No governor may be a member of the committee if they have had prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it. It would not be appropriate for anyone who works at the school to be appointed to this committee.

The chair of the Complaints Committee will ensure that the complainant is notified of any decisions, in writing, within 5 working days of the meeting.

If the complaint is still not resolved the complainant can refer their complaint to the Secretary of State. The School Complaints Unit (SCU) considers complaints relating to LA maintained schools in England on behalf of the Secretary of State. Their National Helpline number is 0370 000 2288.

**GOVERNING BODY REVIEW**

Complaints will not be shared with the whole governing body, except in very general terms in case an appeal panel needs to be organised.

Complainants have the right to request an independent panel if they believe there is likely to be bias in the proceedings. School will consider this request but ultimately the decision is made by the governors.

An anonymous analysis of all formal complaints will be made at regular intervals to inform and improve practice.



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**COMPLAINTS NOT IN THE SCOPE OF THIS PROCEDURE**

Our complaints procedure covers all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that our school provides with the **exceptions** listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures.

Exceptions	Who to Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admissions to schools</li><li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)</li><li>• School re-organisation proposals</li><li>• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li></ul>	Concerns should be raised direct with local authorities (LA). For school admissions, it will depend on who is the admission authority (either the school or the LA). Complaints about admission appeals for maintained schools are dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exclusion of children from school</li></ul>	Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/schooldiscipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/schooldiscipline-exclusions/exclusions</a> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whistleblowing</li></ul>	Schools have an internal whistleblowing procedure for their employees and voluntary staff. Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted by telephone on: 0300 123 3155, via email at: <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a> or by writing to: WBHL, Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD. The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures</li></ul>	These matters will invoke the school's internal grievance procedures. Complainants will not be informed of the outcome of any investigation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities</li></ul>	Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. They should be contacted direct.



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**COMPLAINT FORM**

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone numbers:

Email:

Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint. Who did you speak to and what was the response?



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What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

**Official use:**

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

**\*Please complete and return to school in a sealed envelope.**