



Complaints Procedure (including EYFS)

Reviewed and Ratified by the Chair of Governors on 10th January 2020

Reviewed by the Governing Body January 2020

Next full review by the Governing Body January 2021

Change log:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Change(s) made</u>	<u>Page in policy</u>	<u>By whom</u>
2/5/17	Reviewed by Nick Buckland, Chair of Governors		
16/11/17	Reviewed by the Governing Body		
30/10/18	Paragraph 4 removed on page 3, and paragraph 8 removed on page 6	3, 6	SMT
13/12/19	Updated to reflect current practice		

This is the complaints procedure for St Petroc's School, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is published on our website for parents of current and prospective pupils, as per ISI Guidelines.

St Petroc's School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the school with care and in accordance with this procedure. St Petroc's makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the school's website, on the staff server and in the school office during the school day. St Petroc's will ensure that parents of pupils and of prospective pupils who request it are made aware that this document is published or available and the form in which it is published or available.

St Petroc's School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and will always take seriously any complaint that might be raised. The school is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you or your child raises in good faith.

Definition

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the school has done something wrong, or failed to do so something that it should have done, or acted unfairly.

Confidentiality

Complainants can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and respectfully. Correspondence, statements and records relating to formal complaints and actions taken by the school, regardless of whether or not the complaint is upheld, will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by section 108 & 109 of the 2008 Education Act; where disclosure is required by request of the Secretary of State or in the course of the school's inspection.

Timeframe for Dealing with Complaints

All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They will be acknowledged **within five working** days if received during term time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete the first two stages of the procedure **within 28 days** if the complaint is lodged during term-time and as soon as practicable during holiday periods.

Stage 3, the Appeal Panel Hearing, will be completed **within a further 28 days** if the appeal is lodged during term-time and as soon as is practicable during holiday periods.

Recording Complaints

Following resolution of a complaint, the school will keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing. At the school's discretion, additional records may be kept which may contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- Copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations)

School Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally. If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their child's Class Teacher. In many cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means to the parents' satisfaction. If the Class Teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to consult the Headmaster.

Complaints made directly to the Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Class Teacher unless the Headmaster deems it appropriate for him to deal with personally.

The Class Teacher will inform the Headmaster of any complaint, even if it has been dealt with, and they may make a written record of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received. Should the matter not be resolved within two weeks or in the event that the Class Teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with stage two of this procedure.

If a complaint is about the Headmaster, or a parent feels that the Headmaster cannot deal with the issue, then the Chair of the Governors (Nick Buckland) should be contacted. The Chair will inform the MIST General Secretary.

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 Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.

In most cases, the Headmaster will meet with and speak to the parents concerned, normally within seven 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 Headmaster to carry out further investigations.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint. Once the Headmaster 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 Headmaster will also give reasons for his decision.

If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should proceed to stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If the parents seek to invoke Stage 3 (following a failure to reach an earlier resolution), they will be referred to the Chair of Governors, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings 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 running of the school. The Panel will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within ten working 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 five working days prior to the hearing.

The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate.

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 they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations which it shall complete within ten working days of the hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it (the decision of the Panel will be final). The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head, the Governors and, where relevant, the person complained of.

A written record will be kept of all complaints, whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing. The record will also document any action taken by the school as a result of these complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Complaints Procedure for Early Years

Any parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the setting's provision should first of all talk over any concerns and anxieties with the Class Teacher or Early Years Managers (as outlined in Stage 1 of School Procedures).

If this does not have any satisfactory outcome within 14 days or if the problem reoccurs, the parent should put their concerns or complaint in writing and request a meeting with the Headmaster. An agreed written record of the discussion should be made. This is linking to the second stage of the School Procedures. Written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be

investigated and complainants notified of the outcome within in 28 days of having received the complaint. A record of complaints is made available to Ofsted and ISI on request.

The process moves into stage 3 if required.

Parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage may make complaints direct to Ofsted whose contact details are:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 123 1231

ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate) requires that a satisfactory outcome or resolution is agreed with the complainant within 28 days.

All complaints are documented in writing and any responses made in our complaints folder and kept for three years. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year is available to parents upon request to the Head.

The ISI contact for complaints and appeals is:

Daisy Madder
daisy.madder@isi.net
020 7776 8830