



# St Cuthbert's C of E Primary School

The Chase, Great Glen, Leicester LE8 9EQ  
Tel: 0116 2592764  
Fax: 0116 2593248



## School Complaints Policy & Procedure

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### Our Vision

Doing all the good we can, through faith, love and excellence.

Micah 6:8 "This is what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God."

We want St Cuthbert's to be a school where:

#### Our Ethos

- everyone flourishes through the guidance of our Christian values.
- teaching and learning is creative, engaging and motivational.
- relationships are positive and serve to support others through **compassion** and **kindness**.

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." John 10, V10

#### Our Expectations

- we show **courage** to be the best that we can be.
- the children make excellent progress, fostering a love of learning.
- every child has an **equal** chance to fulfil their full potential.

"All human kind is made in the image of God." Genesis 1, V26-27

#### Individuality

- we grow and flourish as individuals; through **endurance** we can achieve.
- the value and worth of each individual is celebrated and everyone feels included.
- the children develop a spirit of **curiosity** and a willingness to rise to a challenge through a broad, enriched curriculum.

"All people are called to transform the world" Genesis 1 V26-31, Micah 6 V8

#### Working Together

- the children are able to **trust**, show **respect** and **friendship** to others.
- the community enables our pupils and school to grow in a happy, safe, healthy and spiritual environment.
- we foster links and contribute to the educational community through effective communication.

"Every person is an individual and also part of a community." 1 Cor. 12 V12-27

*This is a vision that is inclusive to all as we are reminded in the words of Luke 18:16:  
"But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."  
For we are all equal in the eyes of God.*



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## Compassion

"Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

Colossians 3:12



## Kindness

"Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you."

Ephesians 4:32



## Equal

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

Mark 12:31



## Potential

"Behold they are one people and they have all one language and this is only the beginning of what they will do."

Genesis 11:6



## Courage

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened and do not be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9



## Trust

"My God is my strength in whom I trust."

Psalms 12





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## Friendship

"Encourage one another and build each other up."  
1 Thessalonians 5:11



## Respect

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear  
but of power and love and self-  
control."  
Joshua 1:9



## Endurance

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens"  
Joshua 9





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## Policy for Hearing and Dealing with Complaints

This school is committed to working in close partnership with all members of the school community. The school places great value on the role which parents and carers can play in supporting children's learning. Staff and governors actively encourage a positive relationship between the school and the families of children who attend the school.

If at any time a member of the school community has a concern about any aspect of life at the school (see also SEND policy), the concern will be dealt with by the school as quickly, sympathetically and effectively as possible. It is hoped that most concerns will be settled amicably at this stage.

However, if there is a continuing concern, this can be directed through the formal stages as outlined in the school's complaints procedure, detailed on the following pages.

To enable a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible.

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

### 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 defined as '*an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*'.



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## School Complaints Procedure

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. To this end all staff and governors are aware of the procedure to be followed if a complaint is raised. Also complainants should note that they have a duty to raise a matter as soon as conveniently possible. It can then be investigated more effectively whilst information is fresh in the minds of all parties.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, Jenny Hawkins, Headteacher, will refer you to another staff member. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, Jenny Hawkins, Headteacher, will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages outlined within this complaints procedure.

The school operates a 4 stage complaints procedure. If the complaint concerns the conduct of the headteacher it will be dealt with in accordance with Stage 3.

## How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf on a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or headteacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints against school staff (except the headteacher) should be made in the first instance, to Jenny Hawkins, Headteacher, via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.





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Complaints that involve or are about the headteacher should be addressed to Parveen Kapoor, (the Chair of Governors), via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole governing body should be addressed to Gordon Grimes, (the Clerk to the Governing Body) via the school office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

For ease of use, a template complaint form is included at the end of this procedure. If you require help in completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations like the Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, providing information in alternative formats, assisting complainants in raising a formal complaint or holding meetings in accessible locations.

### Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the headteacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will determine whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

### Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply.

### Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

### Scope of this Complaints Procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Exceptions	Who to contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admissions to schools</li><li>• Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs</li><li>• School re-organisation proposals</li></ul>	Concerns about admissions, statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs, or school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Leicestershire County Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation</li></ul>	Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our child protection and safeguarding



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	<p>policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>If you have serious concerns, you may wish to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has local responsibility for safeguarding or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). &lt;insert LADO/MASH details&gt;.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exclusion of children from school*</li> </ul>	<p>Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions">www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions</a>.</p> <p><i>*complaints about the application of the behaviour policy can be made through the school's complaints procedure.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whistleblowing</li> </ul>	<p>We have an internal whistleblowing procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters direct with their employer. Referrals can be made at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a>.</p> <p>Volunteer staff who have concerns about our school should complain through the school's complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain direct to the LA or the Department for Education (see link above), depending on the substance of your complaint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff grievances</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conduct</li> </ul>	<p>Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.</p> <p>Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities</li> </ul>	<p>Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service. Please contact them direct.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Curriculum - content</li> </ul>	<p>Please contact the Department for Education at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus">www.education.gov.uk/contactus</a></p>



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If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the police, local authority (LA) safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may impact on our ability to adhere to the timescales within this procedure or result in the procedure being suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant commences legal action against St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

### Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not recur
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- an apology.

### Withdrawal of a Complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

### *Stage 1: Complaint heard by staff member*

In the first instance, it is hoped that the complainant will be able to discuss the issue with the member of staff concerned.

The school will respect the views of a complainant who indicates that he/she would have difficulty discussing the complaint with a particular member of staff. In these cases, the complainant should refer the complaint to the headteacher, who will refer it to another member of staff.

Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels too compromised to deal with the complaint, the complaint will be referred to another member of staff via the headteacher. The member of staff will consider the complaint objectively and impartially.





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If the first approach is made to a governor, they will refer the issue and the complainant to the appropriate person and advise the complainant of the procedure. Governors will not act unilaterally outside the formal procedure or be involved at the early stages in case they are needed to sit on a panel at a later stage of the process.

### ***Stage 2: Complaint heard by the headteacher***

The complainant may be dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled at Stage 1, and/or wish to pursue their initial complaint. If so, the complainant should submit the complaint in writing, to the headteacher, within 10 school days of Stage 1 being concluded. A copy of the complaint form is attached to this procedure.

The headteacher will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school days.

The headteacher should meet with the complainant to clarify details of their concerns, the resolution that is being sought and agree a timescale for response. The headteacher will investigate the complaint further and make every effort to resolve the issue. On conclusion of the investigation the headteacher will write to the complainant summarising the outcome reached and the process for appeal.

The headteacher may delegate the task of collating information concerning the complaint to another staff member, but not the decision, nor the action to be taken.

If the complaint is wholly or mainly about the headteacher the complaint will be considered in accordance with Stage 3 of the procedure described below.

### ***Stage 3: Complaint heard by the chair of governors***

If the complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 2 or the complaint concerns the conduct of the headteacher the complainant may take their complaint to the chair of governors.

The complainant will need to write to the chair of governors, care of the school, within 10 school days of the date of the letter notifying them of the outcome of Stage 2. The complainant should provide a copy of the written complaint, a copy of the headteacher's letter concluding Stage 2 and give details in writing of why they are not satisfied with the outcome.

The chair of governors will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school days and provide a timescale for response.

The chair will investigate the complaint and make every effort to resolve the issue, having met with the complainant (if unsure of further information is necessary) and the headteacher. On conclusion of the investigation the chair of governors will write to the complainant summarising the outcome reached and the process for appeal.



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The complaint will move on to Stage 4 if the complainant remains dissatisfied by the outcome.

### *Stage 4: Complaint heard by the governing body Complaints Appeal Panel*

The complainant needs to write to the chair of governors within 10 school days of the date of the letter notifying them of the outcome of Stage 3, notifying that they wish their complaint to be heard by the complaints appeal panel. The chair, or a nominated governor, will convene a governing body complaints appeal panel.

The governors' appeal panel hearing is the last school based stage of the complaints process. Individual complaints will not be heard by the whole governing body at any stage as this could compromise the impartiality of any panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint.

The governing body will nominate 3 governors to have delegated powers to hear the complaint at this stage. These governors should have no previous knowledge of the complaint. The panel will choose their own chair.

The remit of the Complaints Appeal Panel is to:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The complainant will be notified in writing of the panel's decision, usually within 5 school days. The letter will confirm the end of the school's and governing body's involvement with the complaint and explain any further rights of appeal. The complainant should be advised that the local authority has no role unless the complaint relates to a service provided by the local authority.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School will take to resolve the complaint.

The response will also advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied.

### **Next Steps**

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2.



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The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School. They will consider whether St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at: [www.education.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/contactus), by telephone on: 0370 000 2288 or by writing to:

Department for Education  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD.



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## Complaint Form for St. Cuthbert's CE Primary School

Complainants Name:	
Pupil's Name:	
Complainants Relationship to pupil:	
Address of Complainant:	
Post Code:	Daytime Tel:
Mobile:	E-mail:
Please give details of your complaint:	



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

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

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





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**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Official Use:**

**Date acknowledgement sent:**

**By who:**

**Complaint referred to:**

**Date:**