



## Complaints Policy

For the following academies:

St Philip Howard Catholic School

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anney Catholic Primary School

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

St Paul's Catholic College

This Complaints Policy has been approved and adopted by the Bosco Catholic Education Trust.

**Approved:**

February 2021

**For review:**

February 2024

## **Bosco Catholic Education Trust Mission Statement**

The Bosco Catholic Education Trust is a Christ-centred family of Catholic academies, within the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, working together as one body to provide an outstanding education for all. As Catholic schools, we endeavour to develop confident, compassionate and faithful young people. Through partnership, collaboration and mutual support, we seek to enable all those entrusted to our care to become the person God called them to be.

“Serve the Lord joyfully”

## **Complaints Policy**

### **School complaints**

If you have a comment, concern or complaint we would like to know as soon as possible. We always welcome suggestions for improving our work and maintaining our standards. Staff at our schools will acknowledge your complaint within 24 hours and resolve the issue within 5 working days if at all possible.

The complaints procedure is not limited to parents and carers of children registered at the Trust’s schools. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or service that we provide. Unless the complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to admissions), we will use this complaints policy.

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Headteacher or Chair of the Local Governing Committee, if appropriate, will determine whether the anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.

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 where exceptional circumstances apply.

## **What to do first?**

### **Parents' and Carer's concerns**

#### **STAGE ONE**

Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by contacting your child's tutor/subject teacher in our secondary schools or the class teacher in our primary schools. All staff will make every effort to resolve your concern and complaints at the earliest possible stage, taking your concerns seriously, so that the need to use the formal stages of the complaints policy is not necessary.

Concerns raised by suppliers of goods and services can be directed to the school's business managers.

### **Pupils' concerns**

Concerns raised by pupils can be directed to their tutor/classroom teacher.

## **What to do next?**

#### **STAGE TWO**

If you are dissatisfied with the response, or you have a serious concern, you can make a formal complaint to the Headteacher either in writing or by telephone, by email or in person by appointment. The Headteacher will then carry out an investigation and provide a written response within **five working days**.

Complaints against school staff (other than the headteacher) should be made in the first instance to the Headteacher. Complaints that involve or are about the Headteacher should be addressed to the Chair of the Local Governing Committee, via the school office. Complaints about the Chair of the Local Governing Committee, an individual governor or the whole local governing committee should be addressed to the Clerk to the Local Governing Committee, via the school office. All correspondence should be marked Private and Confidential. In the case of complaints against the headteacher, governors or the local governing committee, an investigation will be carried out by governors from the school, from the trust or by independent governors and Trustees as appropriate. You will be interviewed as part of the investigation, you may be accompanied by a supporter for the interview.

### **If you are still unhappy**

#### **STAGE THREE**

We will do all that we can to resolve the matter straight away but if you are still not entirely satisfied you may make a formal complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the school, who will refer it to the Chair of the Local Governing Committee. They will convene a meeting to discuss the matter within **10 working days** and provide you with a written response within **5 working days** of the meeting.

#### **STAGE FOUR**

If after this further action, you are still unhappy then your complaint will be reviewed by a panel consisting of at least three Trustees, who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom will be independent of the Trust, and the parents can be accompanied if they wish. This meeting will take place within **15 school days** of receiving the complaint letter. They will carry out their independent investigation and will ensure that a written reply is sent to you and, where relevant, the person complained about **within 10 days**.

### **Further Action**

Parents who are still not satisfied to the way a complaint has been managed should be referred to:

**CEO, Bosco Catholic Education Trust**  
**c/o St Philip Howard Catholic School, Elm Grove South, Barnham, West Sussex, PO22 0EN**

If the complaint is still not adequately resolved parents can contact the Education Funding Agency via the Department for Education's school complaints form at:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

or by post to the Ministerial and Public Communications Division, Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

## Trust Complaints

If you have a complaint against an officer working on Trust business (not including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)) you should first contact The Chief Executive Officer, c/o St Phillip Howard Catholic School. You may make the complaint in person, in writing or by telephone. The CEO will investigate the complaint, meeting with you if appropriate, and will respond to you in writing within **10 working days**.

In the case of a complaint about the CEO please contact the Chair of the Trust Board who will investigate, meet with you if appropriate, and respond to you in writing within **10 working days**. Care will be taken to find an appropriate time for the meeting with you.

In the case of a complaint against a Trustee, or the whole of the Trust Board, you should make your complaint in writing to the Clerk to the Trust Board, c/o St Philip Howard School. Depending on the nature of the complaint a panel of at least 3 Trustees or Governors, one of whom will be independent of the Trust, will be convened to investigate. They will meet with you if appropriate. They will convene the panel within **10 working days** and report back to you in writing within **5 working days**. Care will be taken to find an appropriate time and place for the panel's meeting with you.

If you believe that the Trust have not handled the complaint in accordance with the published complaints procedure or they have acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of their duties under education law, you can contact the Education Funding Agency via the Department for Education's school complaints form at: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school>

or by post to the Ministerial and Public Communications Division, Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

The Education Funding Agency will not normally re-investigate the substance of the complaints or overturn any decisions made by the school or trust. They will consider whether the school and/or trust has adhered to education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

## **Records**

A written record will be kept of all complaints and all resultant subsequent procedures.

Any findings or recommendations made by a panel in the course of dealing with a complaint will be provided to the complainant and , where relevant, to the person complained of, and will be open for inspection by the Head teacher of the applicable Academy and the CEO and Trustees of the Trust.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to an individual complaint will otherwise be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State for Education or a body conducting an investigation, under s.109 of the {2008 Act}, requests access to them.

## **Persistent Complaints**

Bosco Catholic Education Trust is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially. In some exceptional instances complaints or the complainant's behaviour may be considered by the trust as "unreasonable" or "persistent". In such circumstances the complainant will be told in writing why we believe their complaint and/or their behaviour falls into such categories, what actions the trust will be taking and how the complainant can challenge the trust's decision.

## COMPLAINTS PROCESS FLOW CHART

	Parent/Carer has a concern about something happening at school 	<i>(If the complaint is about the Head, then the informal process starts with a conversation with the Chair of the LGC then proceeds to the formal stage of writing as per Stage Three below)</i>	
<b>STAGE ONE</b> Informal Resolution	Parent/Carer asks for an appointment with child's teacher to discuss issues 		<b>RESOLVED</b> (a) Concluded with no further action needed or (b) an understanding is agreed upon and action to be taken is set.
	<b>NOT RESOLVED</b> 		
<b>STAGE TWO</b> Formal Resolution	Parent/Carer asks for an appointment with the Head and issues discussed/investigated. 		After an agreed period of time action unsuccessful or problem has resurfaced
	Investigation, findings and steps to resolve communicated within <b>5 school days</b> of receiving complaint. 		
	<b>NOT RESOLVED</b> 		
<b>STAGE THREE</b> Formal Resolution	Complaint put in writing to Chair of Local Governing Committee (LGC) via Clerk 		After an agreed period of time action unsuccessful or problem has resurfaced
	Meeting held to investigate within <b>10 school days</b> of receiving complaint. 		

	Investigation, findings and steps to resolve communicated within <b>5 school days</b> of the meeting. ↓	→	<b>RESOLVED</b> (a) Concluded with no further action needed or (b) an understanding is agreed upon and action to be taken is set.
	<b>NOT RESOLVED</b> ↓		↓
<b>STAGE FOUR</b> Formal Resolution	Panel Hearing Complaint put in writing to Clerk to the Trust Board ↓	←	After an agreed period of time action unsuccessful or problem has resurfaced
	Meeting of Trust Board Complaints Panel and complainant within <b>15 school days</b> of receiving the letter. ↓		
	Panel response communicated within <b>10 school days</b> . ↓	→	<b>RESOLVED</b> (a) Concluded with no further action needed or (b) an understanding is agreed upon and action to be taken is set.
	<b>NOT RESOLVED</b> ↓		↓
<b>STAGE FIVE</b>	If the complaint is still not adequately resolved parents can contact the Education Funding Agency via the Department for Education's school complaints form at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school">https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school</a> or by post to: The Ministerial and Public Communications Division, Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD	←	After an agreed period of time action unsuccessful or problem has resurfaced