



Salvatorian  
College

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

'Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.'

Ephesians 4:31-5:2

Updated	Reviewed by	Approved date	Next review due
23/02/2023	Full Governing Board	09/03/2023	Lent Term 2024

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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This procedure deals with complaints from persons other than Governors and pupils and is therefore aimed for use by parents/carers and the general public.

Some complaints may be subject to additional statutory procedures / guidelines (eg. Admissions, Curriculum, Relationship & Sex Education, Exclusions, Special Educational Needs, Staff Grievance to name a few) Links to information about some of these areas are to be found at the end of this policy. However, if parents or the general public wish to complain we encourage you to use the form attached below in the first instance.

Please note that we will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. Additionally, if a complaint is considered to be vexatious and/or malicious or there is a history of complaints, then the Executive Headteacher and Chair of Governors might agree together not to consider the complaint or to consider only part of it. You would be advised in writing within the five-day timescale.

If the object of the complaint is a member of the school's leadership team eg. the Executive Headteacher or Head of School then the complaints procedure will start at Stage 3 - Appeals Stage (i) (see below).

If the object of the complaint is a member of the Governing Body, or the entire Governing Body, then the complaints procedure will start at Stage 4 – Appeals Stage (ii) (see below). The three-person panel will consist of two Members of the Academy Trust and an independent person.

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children in its care. Your comments – either positive or negative – are helpful for future planning. You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint – you just want to get something “off of your chest”. Whatever it is, use the form attached and let us know your views.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel able to complain.

Complainants are advised that any complaint about staff conduct may be considered under this procedure (or under staff disciplinary procedures if the Executive Headteacher or Chair of Governors think the latter is appropriate) but outcomes will not normally be shared with the complainant.

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## **2. OUR PROMISE TO YOU**

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- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 15 working days at each stage
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly

- We will keep you up to date with progress, and inform you of your options, at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right
- You will get a full and clear written reply to formal complaints within 15 school days at each stage, but we will do our best to process things as quickly as we are able to.
- We will keep proper records of your complaint. A written record will be kept of all complaints, as to whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing, along with what actions have been taken, regardless of the decision.
- All correspondence statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential, except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

The School expects complainants to behave calmly and in good faith. Those who are not able to respond in an appropriate way may compromise any investigation. It is not permitted to record conversations and the school or panel will not accept recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded. Meetings with complainants will be held in private and electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not permitted.

As investigations into complaints proceed, any new complaints submitted will be dealt with as such and the complaint procedure started anew.

If we receive a large number of complaints, we reserve the right to send a template response to all complainants and/or publish a response on the school's website.

### **Timescales**

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

### **Complaints received outside term time**

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

There are four stages:

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### **3. STAGE 1 - INFORMAL STAGE**

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A discussion between the complainant and a member of staff. We aim to respond to contact within two school days and settle issues within five school days without the need for any unnecessary formality.

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#### **4. STAGE 2 - FORMAL STAGE**

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If the complainant is not satisfied, they can put the complaint in writing to the Executive Headteacher using the attached form. If necessary, we will arrange a full and fair investigation that respects confidentiality. The Executive Headteacher will either inform the complainant of a decision or tell the complainant how the investigation is proceeding and when a decision is expected. If the complaint is about the Executive Headteacher, it will be passed to a representative of the Governing Body ie. Stage 3 – Appeals Stage (i) applies.

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#### **5. STAGE 3 - APPEALS STAGE (I)**

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If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they can appeal to a representative of the Governing Body. We will acknowledge in writing this stage of the procedure within two school days of the appeal being received. A governor or suitably skilled individual from within the Diocese of Westminster will investigate your complaint and you will be advised in writing of the conclusion and decision within the 15 school day timescale. You will be informed how to proceed to the next stage if you remain dissatisfied.

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#### **6. STAGE 4 – APPEALS STAGE (II)**

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If this does not resolve matters then the complainant may ask for a hearing in front of a three-person panel, which will comprise two governors (who have not been previously involved in dealing with the complaint) and an independent person.

The Independent person will not be employed at the School and be independent of the management and running of the School. They will not have any connection with the School which may reasonably cast doubt upon their ability to be impartial.

We will endeavour to ensure a hearing as soon as possible within a further timescale of 15 school days from date of receipt of the request to convene a panel. The panel will not be called until all stages in the formal stage have been gone through (if this is applicable).

The role of the panel will be to resolve impartially the complaint and the panel will invite the complainant (and an accompanying friend if desired) to discuss the complaint. Other interested parties may be called to meet the panel (this will be at the discretion of the panel). Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend. The complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about will be notified of the decision of the panel in writing within five school days. Furthermore, decisions will be available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the Executive Headteacher. Minutes of the meeting will be copied to the complainant (subject to any necessary redactions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR). The governors' complaints panel will be the last school-based stage of the complaints procedure.

Complainants should be aware that once the School procedures have been exhausted, if it is felt that the School has not handled a complaint properly, then there is recourse to the Department for Education: [https://www.form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact\\_the\\_Department\\_for\\_Education](https://www.form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact_the_Department_for_Education)

Admissions: <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/complain-about-the-appeals-process>  
Special educational needs (SEN): <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/sen>  
Safeguarding matters: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy>  
Exclusion: <https://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/challenging-exclusion>



## COMMENT / COMPLAINT FORM

Name	
Address	
Telephone	

Child's Name (if applicable)	
Year / Form (if applicable)	

Would you like to:  
make a comment  or make a complaint

What is the nature of your comment / complaint?
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What can we do to put things right?

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the Executive Headteacher's PA. It will be passed to the Executive Headteacher / Chair of Governors. You will receive a reply within five working days.