



ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

CURRICULUM COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Background

1. Section 409 of the 1996 Education Act requires the Governing Body to have procedures for the consideration and disposal of complaints relating to matters concerning the curriculum followed within the school.
2. The procedures do not cover complaints about the actions of individual teachers or the Headteacher. If, in the course of consideration of a complaint, it is decided that disciplinary proceedings should be initiated, separate action will be taken as appropriate.
3. The complainant may take his or her representations at each stage of the procedures in person, accompanied by a friend if so desired. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to ensure that information is available to complainants in languages other than English and arrangements made for an interpreter to be present during any oral representations.
4. The duties covered by the procedures are:
 - a). The provision of a curriculum which meets the general requirements of Section 6 of the 2002 Education Act;
 - b). The implementation of the National Curriculum and compliance with Orders and Regulations made about its requirements and exceptions to its provisions;
 - c). Provision of courses leading to external qualification, only if that qualification and the associated specifications have been approved;
 - d). Marking of coursework leading to external qualification, only if that qualification and the associated specifications have been approved;
 - e). Provision of religious education and worship as required by the 1996 Education Act and other enactments;
 - f). The need to act reasonably in deciding whether to apply either with or without the National Curriculum in order to carry out developmental work;
 - g). Consideration for appeals by parents about the temporary withdrawal of pupils from part or all of the National Curriculum in order to carry out developmental work under Section 90 of Education Act 2002;
 - h). Operation of charging policies in relation to the curriculum;
 - i). Compliance with requirements relating to the provision of information;
 - j). Compliance with any other enactments relation to the curriculum.

Process

5. Any concerns expressed by parents and others about the school curriculum and related matters will be dealt with by informal discussion with teachers and/or the Headteacher in the first instance. If dissatisfied, the person concerned may then submit a formal complaint to the Headteacher. He or she must do so in writing, making it clear that it is a formal complaint, and specifying its nature as exactly as possible. The complaint will be entered in the Complaints Log.
6. If the complaint falls outside the scope of the procedures (for example, complaints about an individual teacher, admissions, discipline or statements of special needs), these will be dealt with using the appropriate Governors' policy. The Headteacher will consider urgent complaints as quickly as possible. If it is clear that investigation of the relevant complaint will take some time, the Headteacher will notify the complainant of the fact, and of progress during consideration of the complaint. Following that consideration the Headteacher will inform the complainant of:
 - a. the decision reached, and the reason for it
 - b. any action taken or proposed, including details of any request made to those complained against to take particular actions to resolve the complaint.

7. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Headteacher's response, he or she may refer the matter to the Governing Body by writing to the Clerk to the Governors. The Clerk will write to the complainant with details of how the Governing Body will consider the complaint, and of the complainant's rights as explained in paragraph 3 above and in the paragraphs below.
8. If the complaint appears to be urgent, the Clerk will convene a meeting of the appropriate governing body committee members to consider the complaint within 12 school days of the receipt. If the complaint is not urgent the Clerk will convene a meeting to consider the complaint within 20 school days. The Clerk will give the complainant a minimum of 7 calendar days notice of the date, time and place of the meeting; any reasonable request made by the complainant for an alternative date should result in a mutually convenient alternative date being set at the earliest possible time. If the complainant does not wish to attend the meeting, he or she may present the complaint in writing. The complainant must submit any such material to the Clerk no later than 2 school days before the meeting.
9. Subject to paragraphs 10 and 11, the Headteacher, accompanied by a representative if he/she so wishes, may be present at the meeting of the Governing Body convened to consider a complaint.
10. Where the complainant chooses to attend in person, the usual order of proceedings shall be as follows:
 - a. The chairman of the meeting will welcome those present
 - b. The complainant (or his/her representative) may, if he/she chooses, restate the nature of the complaint
 - c. The complainant (or his/her representative) may be asked questions by the Governors and by the Headteacher
 - d. The Headteacher (or his/her representative) may state what actions or investigations have been taken and the results of these
 - e. The Headteacher may be asked questions by the Governors and by the complainant
 - f. The complainant may, if he/she chooses, summarise the complaint
 - g. The chairman of the meeting will ask both sides if they have been giving adequate opportunity to state their cases
 - h. The Headteacher, complainant and any representatives will be asked to leave
11. The governing body shall consider the complaint at the meeting and any relevant information or factors. They shall only reach a decision after the Headteacher, complainant and any representatives have withdrawn. They shall decide:
 - a. To reject the complaint;
 - b. To uphold the complaint, or
 - c. To investigate the complaint further.
12. The Clerk shall inform the complainant and the Headteacher in writing within 5 school days:
 - a. Of the decision reached by the Governing Body under paragraph 11 and the reasons for the decision. If the Governing Body decides that the complaint falls outside the scope of paragraph 4, the Clerk will inform the complainant of any further resources he or she may have.
 - b. Of any action taken or proposed if the complaint was upheld, including details of any request to those complained against to take particular actions to resolve the complaint. Where the complainant is dissatisfied with action taken or proposed to remedy the complaint, he or she may wish to pursue the matter further with the Headteacher or the Governing Body as appropriate.
 - c. That further recourse lays in a complaint to the LA under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 where the Governing Body has failed to satisfy the complaint. Any such complaints should be addressed to the:

Managing Director
Children, Children, Families & Education
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ

Telephone 01622 694031 email elenquiries@kent.gov.uk

- d. In extreme cases a complaint may be made to the Secretary of State. However it should be emphasised that the Secretary of State is unlikely to consider any individual cases where all other courses of redress have not been exhausted.
- 13. Where, under paragraph 11, the Governing Body decides to investigate the complaint further, the Clerk shall inform the complainant of the steps to be taken and of the progress made. Any subsequent meeting of the Governing Body shall be subject to the provisions described above in so far as they are relevant.
- 14. Complaints regarding the religious education or worship, provided in the school, which have not been resolved may be addressed to the Diocesan Education Officer who can arrange for it to be considered by the Bishop or Archbishop of the Diocese. When the complaint has been fully investigated and considered, the Diocesan Education Officer will write to the complainant and to the Headteacher with the outcome.
- 15. Any queries about the procedures described above should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governors who will be able give further advice.

Reviewed by Curriculum: 5th June 2008
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