



Complaints Policy

(Please read in conjunction with Oxfordshire Complaints Procedure Guidance, 2012 and the School Complaints Procedure)

St. Leonard's is a Church of England School. All policies implemented across the school support the creation of a learning culture which celebrates our Christian ethos and core values of Love, Respect and Responsibility.

Fortunately complaints at our school are few and far between, and are usually based on concerns that can be resolved at an early stage and rarely develop into formal complaints. In most cases the class teacher will receive the first approach, and will often be able to resolve issues on the spot, including apologising where necessary.

More formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further. At this point, the "concern" has become an official complaint and the procedure will be as follows.

In St Leonard's, the complaint would be heard by the Head Teacher, Neil Blackwell. The Head Teacher will collate any information already existing, and also establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved. He will clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved. This may include interviewing individuals involved in the matter. Notes will be made and kept. **If the complaint involves the Head Teacher, then the complaint will be heard by the Chair of Governors, Jill Cheeseman.**

At all stages, the school will keep in mind ways in which a complaint is valid in whole or in part. It may be appropriate to offer: an apology; an explanation; an admission that a situation could have been handled differently or better (NB. This is not the same as an admission of negligence); an assurance that the event complained of will not recur; an explanation of steps taken to ensure this, or even an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

If the complainant is still dissatisfied, then they will need to write to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Jill Cheeseman, giving details of the complaint, and a complaints appeal panel will be convened. The panel can dismiss or uphold the complaint, decide on appropriate action to be taken, and may 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 of this decision in writing.

Throughout, the complainant will be taken seriously and treated respectfully and sensitively. The school will follow the principles and procedures outlined in the document "Schools Complaints Procedure" at all times (available in reception). They will be impartial, non-adversarial, fair, and respect confidentiality, whilst offering support to all parties involved. The Local Authority (LA) is unable to interfere with the school's process for dealing with concerns and complaints providing

that the school has acted in accordance with the correct procedures and regulations. The LA is unable to overturn a lawful decision of the Governing Body (GB). If the parent is concerned that the correct procedures have not been followed or that the GB has acted outside its remit, they will need to contact Governor Services (01865 797320) or governors@oxfordshire.gov.uk in the first instance, for advice.

If the complaint specifically refers to the curriculum, then this will need to be directed to the Secretary of State.

If the complaint is regarding an exclusion, admissions, SEND, transport or racial harassment, different procedures apply; please see individual policies.

Reviewed: September 2017

Ratified by Governing Body _____