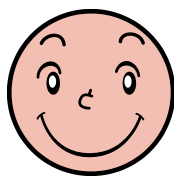


ST MARY'S COLLEGE EARLY YEARS DEPARTMENT

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Date of policy- 24th August 2015
Reviewed annually
Next Review- September 2025

Policy statement

“St Marys College Early Years department has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the nursery with care and in accordance with this procedure. St Marys Early Years department makes its complaints procedure available to all parents of pupils and of prospective pupils on the nursery website and in the nursery office during the nursery day.”

What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be made about the Early Years department as a whole, or about an individual member of staff. A complaint is likely to arise if a parent believes that the nursery has done something wrong, or failed to do something that it should have done or acted unfairly.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The nursery is here for your child and you can be assured that your child will not be penalised for a complaint that you [or your child] raises in good faith.

Where any concern or complaint relates to Child Protection we follow our Safeguarding/Child protection Policy.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution.

- It is our hope that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.
- If parents have a complaint, they should contact their child's department and key person. In many cases the matter will be resolved straightaway to the parents' satisfaction. If the department cannot resolve the matter then the member of staff will consult with the Department Deputy/ Head of Early Years.
- Complaints made directly to the Head of Early Years will usually be referred to the relevant Deputy unless the Head of Early Years deems it necessary that her direct involvement is required.
- In the case of any complaint a Provider Complaints record will be completed by either the Deputy/ Head of Early Years. A copy of the Provider Complaint record is enclosed.
- Should the complaint not be resolved within 7 days or in the event that the Deputy/ Head of Early Years and the parents fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed with their complaint in accordance with Stage 2 of this procedure.

- Should the complaint be concerning the Head of Early Years then this should be raised with the College Principal, Mr M. Kennedy.
- Parents may at any time contact Ofsted with a complaint.
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 123 4666

For more information about Ofsted's role see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-for-parents-about-ofsteds-role-in-regulating-childcare>

- Parents may at any time contact The Independent Schools Inspectorate with a complaint

Independent Schools Inspectorate may be contacted at:
Independent Schools Inspectorate
Cap House
9-12 Long Lane
London
EC1A 9HA
Telephone~020 7600 0100

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Head of the Early Years and / or the Chair of Governors.

Contact ~ Mrs Sheila Ward
Chair of Governors
C/o St Mary's College
Everest Road
Crosby
L23 5TW

- In the case of a complaint being reported to the Chair of Governors or Ofsted, it is mandatory that a provider Complaints Record be completed once the Head of Early Years has been informed.
- The Head of Early Years will then investigate the complaint in relation to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements.
- In most cases the Head of Early Years will speak to the parents concerned, within 7 days of receiving the complaint to discuss the matter and to add further record to the Complaints record. If possible a solution will be reached at this stage.
- It may be necessary for the Head of Early Years to carry out further investigations. As a result of this the Head of Early Years will keep written records of all interviews and meetings held in relation to the complaint.
- Once the Head of Early Years is satisfied that all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and the parents will be informed of this decision in writing and also in person. The Head of Early Years will give an account of the findings of the investigation into the complaint and any action taken within **28 days**.
- If parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they should then proceed to Stage 3 of this procedure.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

- If parents seek to invoke Stage 3 they will be referred to a convenor, who has been appointed by the Governors to call hearings of the complaints panel.
- The complaint will then be referred to the Complaints Panel for consideration.
- The Panel will consist of at least three persons not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom shall be independent of the management and running of the Early Years Department. Each of the Panel members shall be appointed by the Board of Governors. The Convenor, on behalf of the Panel, will then acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within **28 days**.
- If the Panel deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied in advance of the hearing. Copies of such particulars shall be supplied to all parties not later than 3 days prior to the hearing.
- The parents may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The identity of any companion must be notified to the convenor at least 3 days in advance of the hearing. The companion will be required to agree to maintain appropriate confidentiality and the Panel reserves the right not to allow any individual to attend as a companion where that might result in a conflict of interests.
- If possible, the Panel will resolve the parents' complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the Panel will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all facts they consider relevant, the Panel will reach a decision and may make recommendations, which it shall complete within **14 days** of the Hearing. The Panel will write to the parents informing them of its decision and the reasons for it. The decision of the Panel will be final. The Panel's findings and, if any, recommendations will be sent in writing to the parents, the Head of Early Years, Ofsted, Chair of Governors and where relevant, the person complained of.
- Ofsted is the registering authority for nurseries in England and investigates all complaints that suggest a provider may not be meeting the requirements of the nursery's registration. It risk assesses all complaints made and may visit the nursery to carry out a full inspection where it believes requirements are not met.
- Parents will also be informed if the nursery becomes aware that they are going to be inspected and after inspection the nursery will provide a copy of the report to parents and/or carers of children attending on a regular basis.

Further Information:

- Written records of complaints and any action taken will be kept for at least 3 calendar years after completion of the complaints procedure and will be available to Ofsted and Independent Schools' Inspectorate on request.
- A record of complaints will be kept in the nursery. The record will include the name of the complainant, the nature of the complaint, date and time complaint was received, action(s) taken, result of any investigations and any information given to the complainant including a dated response.
- Should a formal complaint directly involve or relate to a teacher, the teacher will be kept fully informed in writing of the procedure being adopted in relation to management of the complaint and will be supplied with copies of relevant documentation. Should the complaint go on to Panel Hearing stage, the teacher will have the right to make representations to the panel.

Parents can be assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential except in so far as is required of the school by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 where disclosure is required in the course of the school's inspection; or where any other legal obligation prevails.

Reviewed by AH 14.12.2020

Reviewed by AH 20.09.2021

Reviewed by AH 01.11.2022

Reviewed by AH 01.09.2023

Reviewed by AH 29.09.2024