

Stoke Bishop Church of England  
Primary School



**Complaints Policy**



‘Believing it’s Possible’

**Approved by:** Leadership & Management Committee **Date:** February 2022

**Last reviewed:** January 2022

**Next review due by:** February 2025

### **Mission statement:**

Our community sits between two rivers that have historically supported growth and success. Working together with trust and passion, we learn, grow and thrive as we embrace the possibilities of life's journey: Understanding that,

" Wherever the river flows, life will flourish" – Ezekiel 47:9

### **School aims:**

At Stoke Bishop C of E Primary School we value every member of our school community and our aims are for everyone to belong through:

- A strong, distributed leadership that supports the emotional and spiritual care of all children and adults
- A curriculum founded on passion that is promoted and experienced by all adults and children, fostering success and promoting academic and social progress.
- Children and adults flourishing in a culture of possibility that is underpinned by effective systems and a principle of equal opportunity for all.
- A supportive, respectful community built on values that are contributed to, understood and appreciated by everyone.

To achieve these aims all learners, staff, parents and governors will work together to promote our **core values** of Grace, Integrity, Courage and Passion.

### **Rationale:**

At Stoke Bishop C of E Primary School, we aim to provide the best possible opportunities for our pupils and to maintain positive relationships with pupils, parents and the wider community. The school recognises, however, that there may be times when a member of our community has a concern or wishes to make a complaint about the standard of service, actions or lack of actions by the school.

This Complaints Policy and the accompanying Procedure is available on the school website or from the school office.

## **How does the Complaints Procedure work?**

The Complaints Procedure is an overarching term for how we deal with Informal complaints (concerns) or Formal complaints. This policy document gives a simple overview of how the school seeks to work with you in addressing any concerns or complaints that you may have, including the key document that you need. The accompanying Complaints Procedure document outlines fully the processes, expectations and potential outcomes of specific actions you may wish to take.

### **I have a concern about my child in school.**

If you have a concern we would always try to deal with this informally through conversation and hopefully reaching a resolution that addresses your concerns. To minimise layers of involvement, speed up outcomes and to ensure you are discussing it directly with the people who have direct knowledge or are in a position to respond to your concern we have a '**Ladder of Responsibility**'

- Classteacher
- Hub Lead
- Deputy Headteacher

This doesn't mean that other staff members won't speak to you or try to help resolve the issue but they may ultimately direct you to or involve an appropriate person on the ladder.

We ask all complainants to consider this route before the next step, a Formal Complaint, in order to achieve an outcome as quickly and effectively as possible.

You may wish to speak to a member of staff who is responsible for a specific aspect of school life or provision. Concerns and sometimes even complaints regarding these aspects are sometimes dealt with differently so it is worth discussing them directly first. These include:

***Exclusions*** – Headteacher (David Forrester)

***Admissions*** – Headteacher (David Forrester)

***Safeguarding / child protection issues*** – Designated Safeguarding Lead (Vickie Melton)

***Special Educational Needs / Inclusion*** – Inclusion Lead (Heather Whittard-Jones)

### **I still wish to make a formal complaint regarding an aspect of school**

The formal complaints procedure is made up of potentially three stages.

- ***Stage 1: Complaint heard by a Senior Member of Staff***
- ***Stage 2: Complaint heard by the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if relating to the Headteacher)***
- ***Stage 3: Complaint is heard by a Complaints Appeals Panel***

*(For a full description of what happens in each of these stages please refer to the Complaints Procedures document, including timescales and what you can expect from each stage. The process is also described in the Flowchart in Appendix B of this document).*

### **How do I make a Formal Complaint?**

If you have attempted to resolve your concerns through informal discussion and still wish to make a complaint then this starts with completing the Formal Complaint Form which you will find attached at the bottom of this Policy document (Appendix A) as well as on the Complaints Procedure document. This should then be sent to the appropriate person:

The Headteacher

[head.stoke.bishop.p@bristol-schools.uk](mailto:head.stoke.bishop.p@bristol-schools.uk)

The Chair of Governors (via the Clerk to the governors)

[clerk.stokebishopp@bristol-schools.uk](mailto:clerk.stokebishopp@bristol-schools.uk)

### **What happens if I do not believe my complaint has been handled properly at the end of Stage 3?**

The fourth stage of the complaints procedure provides the option to refer your complaint to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). It is important for complainants to note:

- The ESFA will expect that the school's complaints process has been fully completed first – ie the complainant has participated in and received an outcome from the Stage 3 part of the school process.
- The ESFA cannot overturn the decision about a complaint. Their role is to make sure the complaint is handled properly by following a published procedure that complies with part 7 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

*For further explanation of the role of the ESFA please see P12 of the Complaints Procedures document.*

### **I'm not sure of the course of action I wish to take**

Speak to us. If you're not clear we can explain the procedures clearly for you and are happy to help in supporting you to find a resolution that answers your concerns. Beyond the formal structures in place in this policy you may wish to speak to a member of staff you feel comfortable with eg The Family Link Worker, Claire Woodman-Smith, who can give you greater clarity which will help you decide your best course of action.



**Formal Complaint form**

Your Name		Date	
Child's Name		Child's class	
Child's DoB		Relationship to child	

Please indicate by ticking below what the complaint concerns

<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visiting teaching staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Headteacher
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Governor / Clerk to Governors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chair of Governors

Please give as much clear detail as possible, including names of anyone involved, relevant date/s and time/s of the incident / s

What action have you already taken to resolve your complaint – eg Who did you speak to and what was the response?

What do you feel might resolve the problem at this Stage?

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Are you attaching any documents / paperwork related specifically to this complaint? Please tick below

	Yes
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	No
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If yes, please give details of these below

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*Please hand this form into the school office in a named envelope OR email to the Head Teacher or Clerk to the Governors, as appropriate. (See Appendix D for relevant addresses)*

Please Note:

The Formal Complaints procedure is as follows:

Stage 1 – Dealt with by a Senior Member of Staff

Stage 2 – Dealt with by the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors

Stage 3 – Dealt with by the Complaints Appeals Panel

Once the above process is complete if the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Appeals Committee, they may contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) who will consider the complaint on behalf of the Secretary of State. Contact can be made online:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus/dfc>

Please read the guidance in 'Referral to the ESFA' on P13 of the Policy.

**For School Use:**

<i>Date acknowledgement sent</i>	
<i>By whom</i>	
<i>Member of SLT complaint referred to</i>	
<i>Date referral made</i>	
<i>Signature</i>	
<i>Name</i>	
<i>Date</i>	

