ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER

Complaints Procedure

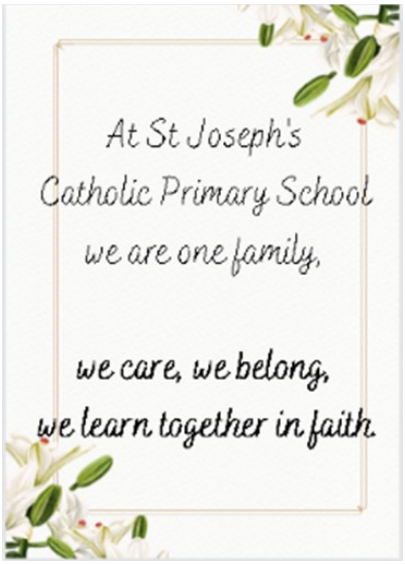
2026 – 2027

We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

Approved by (Head Teacher)	Annette Savage
Approved by (Chair of Governors)	Alex Farrell
Version	2 – October 2026
Proposed review date	October 2027
Based on	DfE Model Complaints Procedure (updated March 2019)

Our Vision & Mission

The heart of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – shared at the start of every school policy



OUR VISION

In the faithful care of St Joseph, Jesus prospered.
We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

OUR MISSION

St Joseph's is a Catholic primary; we are one family. We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

As a school family we:

- promote the partnership of home, school, church and community;
- pray together, grow in faith and live the Gospel values;
- respect and care for everyone and everything around us;
- value each child as an individual;
- encourage our pupils to develop active and creative minds;
- promote self-esteem and confidence;
- set high standards of learning;
- celebrate the achievements of each and every child.

> *St Joseph's is a Catholic School, in which each individual is valued, cherished and nurtured, as they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.*

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. Our values are rooted in the Gospel and underpin our relationships, teaching and learning, preparing our pupils as confident, happy citizens. In partnership with parents and the community, our purpose is to provide a high standard of education, recognising each person's talents and enabling them to fulfil their true potential.

Our Gospel Values are understood and respected by adults and children alike, as we learn and play alongside one another, showing love, care and forgiveness in all we do. At St Joseph's we focus on the following Gospel Values:

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Honesty & Forgiveness The Prodigal Son *Luke 15:11–32*	**Respect & Resilience** The Three Wise Men *Matthew 1:1–12*	**Community** Sharing a Meal *Acts 2:46–47*
Thankfulness & Perseverance The Birth of Christ *Luke 2:9–10*	**Generous & Proud** The Good Samaritan *Luke 10:25–37*	**Eloquent & Truthful** Pentecost – The power of the Holy Spirit *Acts 2:1–31*
	Trust Parting of the Red Sea *Exodus 14:21–22*	

Our Mission Statement was written involving all stakeholders in our school – children, parents, staff and governors. It is clearly understood by all, underpinning all we do in school and determining our whole purpose and ethos. We firmly believe that wherever you are in our school you will see our mission statement being lived – in class, in the playground and in our interactions and love of each other.

Document Control

Approved by	Name	Signed	Date
Head Teacher	Annette Savage		
Chair of Governors	Alex Farrell		

Version	Description	Date
1	Complaints procedure based on the DfE model complaints procedure. Approved by the Chair of Governors.	November 2025
2	Rewritten in a shorter format based on the DfE Model Complaints Procedure, from 'School complaints procedures: guidance for maintained schools'. Formal Stage 1 and Stage 2 process with timescales of 5 school days to acknowledge, 14 school days to respond, 7 school days to request Stage 2 and 7 school days for the Stage 2 decision. Added: EYFS (Reception) 28-day response, unreasonable and duplicate complaints, complaints outside term time, withdrawal, St Joseph's contacts, admissions as a voluntary aided school and current Cumberland safeguarding contacts.	October 2026

Roles within this procedure

Complaints Co-ordinator	Annette Savage (Head Teacher)
Head Teacher	Annette Savage
Chair of Governors	Alex Farrell
Clerk to the Governors	Kiri Skelton
Contact (all roles)	School office – 01946 810702, admin@st-josephsrc.cumbria.sch.uk

Timescales at a glance

Stage 1 – acknowledgement	within 5 school days
Stage 1 – written response	within 14 school days of the acknowledgement (28 days for EYFS complaints)
Request Stage 2	within 7 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response
Stage 2 – acknowledgement	within 5 school days
Stage 2 – committee meeting	aim within 14 school days of the acknowledgement
Stage 2 – written decision	within 7 school days of the meeting

Proposed review date: October 2027.

This procedure is based on the Department for Education's Model Complaints Procedure, published with 'School complaints procedures: guidance for maintained schools' (DfE, last updated January 2021): www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures

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1. Who can make a complaint?

This complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children who are registered at St Joseph's. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School about any provision of facilities or services that we provide. Unless complaints are dealt with under separate statutory procedures (such as appeals relating to exclusions or admissions), we will use this complaints procedure.

2. The difference between a concern and a complaint

A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

A complaint may be defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. St Joseph's takes concerns seriously and will make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases, Miss Annette Savage, Head Teacher, will refer you to another member of staff. Similarly, if the member of staff directly involved feels unable to deal with a concern, Miss Savage will refer you to another member of staff. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important.

We understand, however, that there are occasions when people would like to raise their concerns formally. In this case, St Joseph's will attempt to resolve the issue internally, through the stages set out in this complaints procedure.

3. How to raise a concern or make a complaint

A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. It may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so, which is evidenced to the school.

Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or the Head Teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.

Complainants should not approach individual governors to raise concerns or complaints. Governors have no power to act on an individual basis, and doing so may also prevent them from considering complaints at Stage 2 of the procedure.

Complaints about school staff (except the Head Teacher) should be made in the first instance to Miss Annette Savage, Head Teacher, via the school office. Please mark them Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Head Teacher should be addressed to Alex Farrell, Chair of Governors, via the school office. Please mark them Private and Confidential.

Complaints about the Chair of Governors, any individual governor or the whole Governing Body should be addressed to Mrs Kiri Skelton, Clerk to the Governing Body, via the school office. Please mark them Private and Confidential.

School office: St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Yeathouse Road, Frizington, CA26 3PX. Telephone 01946 810702. Email admin@st-josephsrc.cumbria.sch.uk.

For ease of use, a complaint form is included at the end of this procedure (Appendix A). If you need help completing the form, please contact the school office. You can also ask third party organisations such as Citizens Advice to help you.

In accordance with equality law, we will consider making reasonable adjustments if required, to enable complainants to access and complete this complaints procedure. For instance, we can provide information in alternative formats, assist complainants in raising a formal complaint or hold meetings in accessible locations.

4. Anonymous complaints

We will not normally investigate anonymous complaints. However, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors, if appropriate, will decide whether the complaint warrants an investigation.

5. Unreasonable or persistent complaints

St Joseph's is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly, impartially and in accordance with this procedure. We recognise that complainants may feel upset or frustrated, and that making a complaint does not, in itself, make someone unreasonable.

However, we do not expect staff to tolerate abusive, offensive, threatening or intimidating behaviour. We may take proportionate action where the frequency or nature of a complainant's contact unreasonably hinders the investigation of their complaint or affects the work of the school.

This may include repeatedly raising the same matter after it has been fully investigated and the complaints procedure has been completed, making excessive or unreasonable demands on staff time, refusing to engage constructively with the complaints process, or using abusive or threatening language or behaviour.

Where appropriate, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will explain their concerns to the complainant and give them an opportunity to change their behaviour. If the behaviour continues, the school may write to the complainant to explain that their contact is considered unreasonable and set out any proportionate measures that will be put in place. These may include agreeing a single point of contact, specifying the method of communication or setting reasonable limits on the frequency of contact.

Any restrictions will be proportionate to the circumstances and reviewed as appropriate. They will not prevent a complainant from raising a new, legitimate concern or from using the formal stages of this complaints procedure where applicable.

The school will consider each case individually, taking account of any relevant circumstances and its duties under equality law. Any decision to take action under this section will be recorded, together with the reasons for the decision.

6. Duplicate complaints

If the school receives a complaint about an issue that has already been considered and the complaints procedure has been completed, including where the complaint is raised by another family member or on behalf of the original complainant, we will check whether any new information or concerns have been raised that need further consideration. Where there are no new aspects to the complaint, we will explain that the matter has already been investigated and the school's complaints procedure has been completed. We will not normally reopen or reinvestigate the same complaint, but will advise the complainant of their right to contact the Department for Education if they remain dissatisfied with how the original complaint was handled.

7. Time scales

You must raise the complaint within three months of the incident or, where a series of 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.

8. Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period. Our term dates are published on the school website (www.stjosephs-catholicprimaryfrizington.co.uk) and are available from the school office.

9. Scope of this complaints procedure

This procedure covers all complaints about any provision of community facilities or services by St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, other than complaints that are dealt with under other statutory procedures, including those listed below.

Admissions to school

As a voluntary aided school, the Governing Body of St Joseph's is the admission authority, and Cumberland Council co-ordinates applications in the normal admission round. If your child was not offered a place and you want to appeal, you have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. The letter telling you the outcome of your application explains how to appeal. Our Admissions Policy is on the school website.

Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs

Concerns about statutory assessments of special educational needs, or about an Education, Health and Care plan, should be raised with Cumberland Council. Cumberland SENDIASS (sendiass.cumberland.gov.uk) gives free, impartial advice to parents and carers.

School re-organisation proposals

Concerns about school re-organisation proposals should be raised with Cumberland Council.

Matters likely to require a Child Protection investigation

Complaints about child protection matters are handled under our Child Protection Policy and in accordance with relevant statutory guidance.

If you are worried that a child is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999. If you are worried that a child is at risk of harm, contact the Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CASS) on 0333 240 1727.

If you have concerns about an adult who works with children (paid or unpaid), you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 0300 303 3892 or by email at lado@cumberland.gov.uk.

Exclusion of children from school*

Concerns about suspension and permanent exclusion are handled under our Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy, available on the school website. Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions.

* Complaints about the application of the Behaviour Policy can be made through this complaints procedure.

Whistleblowing

We have an internal Whistleblowing Procedure for all our employees, including temporary staff and contractors.

The Secretary of State for Education is the prescribed person for matters relating to education for whistleblowers in education who do not want to raise matters directly with their employer. Referrals can be made at www.gov.uk/contact-dfe.

Volunteers who have concerns about our school should complain through this complaints procedure. You may also be able to complain directly to Cumberland Council or the Department for Education, depending on the substance of your complaint.

Staff grievances

Complaints from staff will be dealt with under the school's internal grievance procedures.

Staff conduct

Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be told that the matter is being addressed.

Services provided by others using school premises or facilities

Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about their service. Please contact them directly.

National Curriculum content

Please contact the Department for Education at www.gov.uk/contact-dfe.

If other bodies are investigating aspects of the complaint, for example the Police, local authority safeguarding teams or Tribunals, this may affect our ability to keep to the timescales in this procedure, or the procedure may be suspended until those public bodies have completed their investigations.

If a complainant begins legal action against St Joseph's in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

10. Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, St Joseph's wants to resolve the complaint. If appropriate, we will acknowledge that the complaint is upheld in whole or in part. In addition, we may offer one or more of the following:

- an explanation;
- an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- an assurance that we will try to ensure the event complained of will not happen again;
- an explanation of the steps that have been or will be taken to help ensure that it will not happen again, and an indication of the timescales within which any changes will be made;
- an undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint;
- an apology.

11. Withdrawal of a complaint

If a complainant wants to withdraw their complaint, we will ask them to confirm this in writing.

12. Stage 1

Formal complaints should be made using the Complaint Form at the end of this procedure (Appendix A) and returned to the school office, marked Private and Confidential, for the attention of the Head Teacher. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher, it should be addressed to the Chair of Governors. If it is about the Chair of Governors or another governor, it should be addressed to the Clerk to the Governing Body. If you need help completing the form, please contact the school office.

The Head Teacher will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (by letter or email) within 5 school days.

In this response, the Head Teacher will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Head Teacher can consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

Note: The Head Teacher may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.

During the investigation, the Head Teacher (or investigator) will:

- if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- keep a written record of any meetings or interviews in relation to their investigation.

At the end of their investigation, the Head Teacher will provide a formal written response within 14 school days of the acknowledgement of the complaint. Where a written complaint is about our meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, we will investigate and give a written response within 28 days of receiving it, as the framework requires.

If the Head Teacher or investigator is unable to meet this deadline, they will give the complainant an update and a revised response date.

The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and give a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions St Joseph's will take to resolve the complaint.

The Head Teacher will advise the complainant how to escalate their complaint if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1.

If the complaint is about the Head Teacher or a member of the Governing Body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 1.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice-Chair, or
- about the entire Governing Body, or
- about the majority of the Governing Body,

Stage 1 will be considered by an independent investigator appointed by the Governing Body. At the end of their investigation, the independent investigator will provide a formal written response.

13. Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2: a meeting with members of the Governing Body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three impartial governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.

A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Clerk, via the school office, within 7 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response.

The Clerk will record the date the request is received and acknowledge receipt in writing (by letter or email) within 5 school days. Requests received outside this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.

The Clerk will write to the complainant to tell them the date of the meeting. They will aim to hold the meeting within 14 school days of acknowledging the Stage 2 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will give an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.

If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then go ahead in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

The complaints committee will consist of at least three governors with no prior involvement in or knowledge of the complaint. Before the meeting, they will decide among themselves who will act as Chair of the complaints committee. If there are fewer than three governors from St Joseph's available, the Clerk will source additional, independent governors through another local school, Cumberland Council's Governor Services team or the Diocese of Lancaster, to make up the committee. Alternatively, an entirely independent committee may be convened to hear the complaint at Stage 2.

The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.

If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend. Generally, we do not encourage either party to bring legal representatives to the committee meeting. However, there may be occasions when legal representation is appropriate. For instance, if a school employee is called as a witness in a complaint meeting, they may wish to be supported by union and/or legal representation.

Note: Complaints about staff conduct will not generally be handled under this complaints procedure. Complainants will be advised that any staff conduct complaints will be considered under staff disciplinary procedures, if appropriate, but outcomes will not be shared with them.

Representatives from the media are not permitted to attend.

At least 7 school days before the meeting, the Clerk will:

- confirm and notify the complainant of the date, time and venue of the meeting, ensuring that, if the complainant is invited, the dates are convenient to all parties and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- request copies of any further written material to be submitted to the committee at least 5 school days before the meeting.

Any written material will be circulated to all parties at least 5 school days before the date of the meeting. The committee will not normally accept, as evidence, recordings of conversations that were obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded.

The committee will not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the original complaint. New complaints must be dealt with from Stage 1 of the procedure.

The meeting will be held in private. Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a complainant's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations take place. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

The committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented. The committee can:

- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part.

If the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, the committee will:

- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- where appropriate, recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to prevent similar issues in the future.

The Chair of the committee will give the complainant and St Joseph's a full explanation of their decision and the reason(s) for it, in writing, within 7 school days. The letter to the complainant will include details of how to contact the Department for Education if they are dissatisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by St Joseph's.

If the complaint is:

- jointly about the Chair and Vice-Chair, or
- about the entire Governing Body, or
- about the majority of the Governing Body,

Stage 2 will be heard by a committee of independent governors. The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and give a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions St Joseph's will take to resolve the complaint. The response will also advise the complainant how to escalate their complaint if they remain dissatisfied.

14. Next steps

If the complainant believes the school did not handle their complaint in accordance with this published complaints procedure, or acted unlawfully or unreasonably in the exercise of its duties under education law, they can contact the Department for Education after they have completed Stage 2.

The Department for Education will not normally reinvestigate the substance of complaints or overturn any decisions made by St Joseph's. They will consider whether St Joseph's has followed education legislation and any statutory policies connected with the complaint.

The complainant can refer their complaint to the Department for Education online at www.gov.uk/contact-dfe, by telephone on 0370 000 2288, or by writing to: Department for Education, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Appendix A – Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to the school office in a sealed envelope marked "Private and Confidential" addressed to the Head Teacher (Annette Savage), the Chair of Governors (Alex Farrell), or the Clerk to the Governing Body (Kiri Skelton) depending on who or what the complaint is about.

They will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name		
Pupil's name (if relevant)		
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant)		
Address including postcode		**Daytime tel. no.**
		Evening tel. no.
Your email address		
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it and what happened		
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?		
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.		
Signature		**Date:**

For official use only		
Acknowledgement sent by		**Date:**
Method (e.g. email)		
Complaint referred to		**Date:**
Action taken		
Action date		

Appendix B – Roles and Responsibilities

Complainant

The complainant will receive a more effective response to the complaint if they:

- explain the complaint in full as early as possible;
- co-operate with the school in seeking a solution to the complaint;
- respond promptly to requests for information or meetings or in agreeing the details of the complaint;
- ask for assistance as needed;
- treat all those involved in the complaint with respect;
- refrain from publicising the details of their complaint on social media and respect confidentiality.

Investigator

The investigator's role is to establish the facts relevant to the complaint by:

- providing a comprehensive, open, transparent, and fair consideration of the complaint through:
  - sensitive and thorough interviewing of the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved;
  - interviewing staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint;
  - consideration of records and other relevant information;
  - analysing information;
- liaising with the complainant and the complaints co-ordinator as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.

The investigator should:

- conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning;
- keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting;
- ensure that any papers produced during the investigation are kept securely pending any appeal;
- be mindful of the timescales to respond;
- prepare a comprehensive report for the Head teacher or Complaints Committee that sets out the facts, identifies solutions and recommends courses of action to resolve problems.

The Head teacher or Complaints Committee will then determine whether to uphold or dismiss the complaint and communicate that decision to the complainant, providing the appropriate escalation details.

Complaints Co-ordinator

At St Joseph's we do not have a separate complaints co-ordinator, so these duties are carried out by the Head Teacher. The complaints co-ordinator should:

- ensure that the complainant is fully updated at each stage of the procedure;
- liaise with staff members, Head teacher, Chair of Governors, Clerk and LAs (if appropriate) to ensure the smooth running of the complaints procedure;
- be aware of issues regarding:
  - sharing third party information;
  - additional support. This may be needed by complainants when making a complaint including interpretation support or where the complainant is a child or young person;
- keep records.

Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is the contact point for the complainant and the committee and should:

- ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of their legal rights and duties, including any under legislation relating to school complaints, education law, the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018;
- set the date, time, and venue of the meeting, ensuring that the dates are convenient to all parties (if they are invited to attend) and that the venue and proceedings are accessible;
- collate any written material relevant to the complaint (for example; stage 1 paperwork, school, and complainant submissions) and send it to the parties in advance of the meeting within an agreed timescale;
- record the proceedings;
- circulate the minutes of the meeting;
- notify all parties of the committee's decision.

Committee Chair

The committee's chair, who is nominated in advance of the complaint meeting, should ensure that:

- both parties are asked (via the Clerk) to provide any additional information relating to the complaint by a specified date in advance of the meeting;
- the meeting is conducted in an informal manner, is not adversarial, and that, if all parties are invited to attend, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy;
- complainants who may not be used to speaking at such a meeting are put at ease. This is particularly important if the complainant is a child/young person;
- the remit of the committee is explained to the complainant;
- written material is seen by everyone in attendance, provided it does not breach confidentiality or any individual's rights to privacy under the DPA 2018 or GDPR;
- If a new issue arises it would be useful to give everyone the opportunity to consider and comment upon it; this may require a short adjournment of the meeting;
- both the complainant and the school are given the opportunity to make their case and seek clarity, either through written submissions ahead of the meeting or verbally in the meeting itself;
- the issues are addressed;
- key findings of fact are made;
- the committee is open-minded and acts independently;
- no member of the committee has an external interest in the outcome of the proceedings or any involvement in an earlier stage of the procedure;
- the meeting is minuted;
- they liaise with the Clerk and the complaints co-ordinator.

Committee Member

Committee members should be aware that:

- the meeting must be independent and impartial, and should be seen to be so

  No Governor may sit on the committee if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it.

- the aim of the meeting should be to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant

We recognise that the complainant might not be satisfied with the outcome if the meeting does not find in their favour. It may only be possible to establish the facts and make recommendations.

- many complainants will feel nervous and inhibited in a formal setting

  Parents/carers often feel emotional when discussing an issue that affects their child.

- extra care needs to be taken when the complainant is a child/young person and present during all or part of the meeting

  Careful consideration of the atmosphere and proceedings should ensure that the child/young person does not feel intimidated.

  The committee should respect the views of the child/young person and give them equal consideration to those of adults.

  If the child/young person is the complainant, the committee should ask in advance if any support is needed to help them present their complaint. Where the child/young person's parent is the complainant, the committee should give the parent the opportunity to say which parts of the meeting, if any, the child/young person needs to attend.

  However, the parent should be advised that agreement might not always be possible if the parent wishes the child/young person to attend a part of the meeting that the committee considers is not in the child/young person's best interests.

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

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