

# Complaints Policy 2020

By	Review period	Method
Full Governing board		Meeting

Ownership: Helen Peace, Chief Financial and Operations Officer

## Revision History

Review	Changes	Next review date
November 2015	Additional stage added	November 2016
October 2016	Process clarified	October 2017
October 2017	Further detail on process added	October 2018
November 2018, February and June 2019	Revised for organisational changes	November 2019
September 2020	Updated	September 2021

# Romero Trust

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Purpose of the Policy

To always be receptive to any parent or other party who may wish to raise an issue or complaint and to take all possible reasonable steps to resolve any issue or complaint as quickly as possible. To set out clear procedures for any person especially parents who wish to raise an issue or complaint.

We seek to provide a broad, balanced Christian education which aims to help each child develop their full potential.

We are a worshipping community which recognises the uniqueness of the individual and aims to promote the Gospel values of love and respect for God and one another.

We open ourselves to others and respect their ways of thinking and living.

The school encourages effective communication and good relationships with home, parish and wider community.

This policy supports this by reviewing feedback from individuals to ensure the School is making a positive contribution to young people's development.

### Outline of the Policy

#### Approach

We believe that the school provides a good education for all our pupils and that all the staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and the local community. We ask that any individual who wishes to raise an issue or complaint follows the procedure outlined in the appendix so that these issues can be resolved as quickly as possible and further action can be taken if necessary.

The school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the student above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

This should result in the parent being able to talk in the first instance to the relevant class teacher or tutor about the complaint. It is the policy of the school to always try to resolve complaints through discussion rather than correspondence.

Where the complaint is about something other than a matter linked to a pupil then the complaint will be initially dealt with by the most relevant member of staff.

In order to monitor the extent of complaints at the trust all complaints, including issues and concerns, should be registered with dates and enough brief details to provide an audit trail and to be able to monitor any significant trends. The exact form of the register and the processes used to capture any complaint or issue details is determined by the

school management. This register is kept confidential but is open to inspection at any time by Senior Leadership Group members. The types of complaints and remedies are reported regularly to the Governing Body. All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 162A of the 2002 Education Act requests access to them. A log of complaints is kept by the Clerk to the Governing Body for the school

The school will always support any staff member who requests to be accompanied at any meetings with parents that are to be held or any meetings about a complaint.

The school recognises that in complying with this policy there will be an element of data processing carried out. For more information on how the School processes data please refer to the School's privacy notices and the Information and Records Retention Policy.'

## APPENDIX

### THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

The trust operates a 4 stage process for the resolution of complaints.

#### **STAGE 1**

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our School the policy is that they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher, tutor or student manager. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All staff work very hard to ensure that each student is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the student's progress.

Where the complaint is from another party this should be raised with the most appropriate member of staff who will consider the complaint and respond to the concern.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, tutor or student manager, they may request an informal telephone conversation or meeting with the Head of year, Head of Department or Head of Faculty. If the matter is not resolved at this stage an informal request may be made for a meeting or telephone conversation with a member of the Senior Leadership team. The School will aim to respond to a request for a conversation or meeting within 5 School days.

#### **STAGE 2.**

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after an informal response then they should write to the Executive Principal stating clearly that they are making a complaint, giving details of the issue and enclose any appropriate paperwork. A response from the Executive Principal or designated senior member of staff will be made within 5 School days. This member of staff will be different from any member involved in stage one of the process. They will investigate in order to clarify what has happened, who has been involved and what actions could be taken if necessary to resolve the situation. As part of this investigation they may contact the complainant to fully understand the issues. If an in-depth investigation is necessary every attempt will be made to respond within 15 School days. If a complainant remains dissatisfied after the final response from the Executive Principal or designated member of the senior leadership team then Stage 3 of the process will be used.

#### **STAGE 3**

If a complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 2, which we would classify as an informal stage, the complaint should be submitted, in writing, to the School, for the attention of the Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair of the Governing Body or the Vice Chair

of the Governing body will investigate to clarify what has happened and the solutions which have been put into place following the stage two and respond within 15 School days. Where the Chair or Vice Chair of the Governing Body is not available this may be delegated to a another Governor. This investigation may involve meeting with staff named in the complaint and the complainant.

In the event that the governor cannot resolve the complaint to satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant can ask for the complaint to be considered by Stage 4 of the process once the final response from the Chair of the Governing Body has been received.

#### **STAGE 4**

Stage 4 of the process involve a panel of at least 3 people. Panel members will be selected from individuals who have had no involvement previously with the complaint or any issues surrounding it. At least one panel member will be completely independent to the school, i.e., not current staff, parent or Governor. If possible the other two members will be made up from staff and a Governor who has not been involved with the complaint so far in the process.

The School will aim to convene a panel meeting within 15 School days of receipt of a Stage 4 complaint. The panel will respond within 10 further school days of the meeting.

This panel will meet to discuss the complaint and request any additional information they feel necessary.

The parent or other party making the complaint may attend and be accompanied at this panel hearing when they are presenting their case. A member of the senior leadership team will also be invited to attend to answer any questions that the panel may have.

After the panel have met and arrived at a decision, the parent or other party will be informed of the decision, after the hearing if they are in attendance and/or by email and post.

After hearing any representations by the complainant the panel will deliberate in private and reach a decision unless they decide that further legal advice or investigation is required.

The complainant will be informed of any decision immediately afterwards if they are in attendance or in writing by post or email if they are not. Any verbal communication of a decision will be confirmed in writing within 5 School days

To avoid doubt, School management will decide when each stage of the process is exhausted and will communicate this to the complainant.

The person who is the recipient of the complaint will also be informed of the decision, if relevant.

Where the complaint is about the Executive Principal or Head of School the person raising the complaint should in the first instance direct correspondence to the Chair of the Governing body c/o the Clerk. The Chair will designate a Governor to investigate the complaint in a similar process described above. This will not be a staff or parent Governor

Where the complaint is about the Chair of the Governing Body or another Governor then in the first instance direct correspondence to the Clerk to the Governing Body who will designate a Governor to investigate the complaint in a similar process described above. If appropriate this is likely to be Vice Chair of the Governing body.

Where the complaint is about the clerk then correspondence should be directed to the Chair of the Governing Body who will designate an appropriate person to investigate in a similar process to that described above.

Where a complainant is raising serial complaints or endeavouring to reopen issues which the School has responded to and taken reasonable steps to address the issue the School will re-issue the statement of response and then not respond further. This is likely to be the case when the School believes that the individual is contacting the School with the intention of causing disruption or inconvenience, the communications from the complainant are abusive or aggressive there are threats made to the School or its staff.

*Initial complaints about institutions funded by the ESFA can be made on the 'Contact Us' form on the ESFA website:*

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

*They can also be made in writing to:*

**ESFA** Institution Complaints

Young People's Programme Management

Education Skills Funding Agency

Earlsdon Park 55 Butts Road Coventry CV1 3BH