

Nottingham Roman Catholic  
**Diocesan Education Service**



**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

January 2026

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service (NRCDES) acts on behalf of and advises the Bishop of Nottingham in all matters concerning Catholic education. We support schools within the Diocese of Nottingham to ensure that they are successful and that they act in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese. This involves us offering advice and direction on a broad range of educational matters such as Religious Education, the Catholic Life of a school, prayer and liturgy, governance, admissions appeals.

We aim to deliver our services underpinned by Gospel values, placing Christ at the centre of all that we do.

In order to do this, the team at the NRCDES works closely with the Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts in the Diocese of Nottingham and their constituent academies, the independent school, local authorities, the Department for Education and the Regional Director. The NRCDES is governed by a Board of Directors and takes legal advice from the Catholic Education Service.

## **SCOPE**

This procedure is for the use of any individual or body who wishes to raise a concern or provide feedback on the services delivered by the NRCDES or on the actions of NRCDES team members. We also welcome positive feedback, suggestions and ideas about our services at any time.

This procedure does not cover complaints about Catholic School Inspection. If you have a concern about our inspection service, please refer to the Catholic School Inspection Complaints Procedure which is available to view or download from our website.

All of the schools in the Diocese of Nottingham, with the exception of our independent school, are now academies in one of our three diocesan Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts. Complaints about the decisions or actions of one of the Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts, an academy or their staff must be raised directly with them rather than with the NRCDES. A complaint relating to an independent school must be raised directly with the school.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Concerns about safeguarding or child protection at any of our academies should be raised directly with the academy. If you have an urgent concern about the safety of a child then you should call the police as soon as possible.

## **PRINCIPLES**

We aim to deliver our service fairly and reasonably and we are always looking to improve what we do. However, we know that we may not get things right all of the time and we welcome feedback from any user of our services so that we can act swiftly in order to put things right. We are committed to the general principles below:

- We will ensure that all of our staff are aware of this procedure
- We will take all concerns, feedback and complaints seriously
- We will seek resolution to your complaint
- We will handle all matters respectfully and sensitively
- We will deal with your concern as speedily as possible, keeping you informed of progress
- In considering your complaint, we will be fair and objective
- Our investigations will be proportionate and thorough
- We will always respond to each concern raised
- We will record and monitor complaints and resolutions so that we can further improve our services
- We will apologise to you where our services have fallen short of the standards we expect
- We will publicise our procedure on our website

## **DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT**

Our definition of a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about our services or actions that requires a response from us.

## **REACHING A RESOLUTION QUICKLY AND INFORMALLY**

We aim to resolve concerns informally and quickly and, in our experience, we are able to do this in the vast majority of cases. Concerns should be raised initially with the individual concerned who will look into the matter and respond to you. This can be carried out face to face, over the phone or by email. The timescale for a response will depend on the complexity of the issue and the working pattern of the individual. Our expectation is that we will respond to you within 14 working days. It may be the case that the complaint you are making is not able to be resolved, where this is the case, you will be informed of this in writing and the complaint will be closed. However, there may be occasions when it has not been possible to reach a resolution informally, and in this case, our formal procedure will be followed.

## FORMAL PROCEDURE

If it has not been possible to resolve your concern informally, you may make a formal complaint. You may do this either by email or in writing to:

Mrs Laura O'Brien  
Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service  
The Diocesan Centre  
Mornington Crescent  
Mackworth  
Derby  
DE22 4BD  
email: [complaints@nottingham-des.org.uk](mailto:complaints@nottingham-des.org.uk)

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days of us receiving your letter or email and we will explain the steps that will be taken to address your complaint. (We may also contact you by telephone or email within the first few days of us receiving the complaint so that we can clarify the issues you have raised and seek further information from you to support your complaint where that will assist us in supporting the investigation.)

Your complaint should set out the following information:

- Your name and contact details
- The date, time and location of the incident if appropriate
- The specific action or service to which your concern relates
- Which individuals are directly or indirectly involved
- What action or actions you are seeking from us in order to resolve the matters raised

Please complete the form at **Appendix 1** to ensure that all the above information is captured so that we can address your concerns swiftly.

## FORMAL INVESTIGATION

Your complaint will be investigated by someone within the organisation appointed by the NRCDES Director named above. The NRCDES Director has the discretion to appoint an external person from outside the NRCDES if s/he considers that there is no one appropriate from within the NRCDES to handle that particular complaint. This is a decision for the NRCDES Director and not for the complainant.

## FORMAL OUTCOMES

We will respond in writing to formal complaints within 30 working days of having received the complaint. If the case is complex or if we are awaiting information from third parties in order to complete an investigation or other unexpected circumstances, then we will let you know the reasons for the delay and discuss a revised timescale with you.

Our response will include a report on the process we followed, the evidence we reviewed, any recommendations for improving our services and our conclusions with reasons which will be one of the following:

- Complaint upheld – with an apology and details about what we will do to put things right
- Complaint not upheld – with a full explanation
- No decision could be reached – see below

Our aim is always to seek resolution and we hope that in the vast majority of cases, we will achieve this. However, there may be rare occasions when agreement cannot be reached, for example there may be conflicting accounts of an event which cannot be independently verified, and in this case, a 'no decision could be reached' conclusion will be made.

The decision reached at the end of the formal procedure is final and there is no further right of appeal.

## PRIVACY STATEMENT

We will use the personal data which you supply to us as part of this procedure for the following purposes:

- To properly and thoroughly investigate your complaint – your name, company and contact details
- To share with others directly involved in the complaint – your name, company and contact details
- To monitor the impact of this policy, particularly in respect of equalities – your equalities data

Your data will be stored confidentially and securely and retained only for as long as is necessary for the above purposes. Data relating to equalities will be collected and held anonymously and used only for monitoring purposes. It will not be shared as part of the investigation.

## **MONITORING OF THIS POLICY**

We will report to the NRCDES Board annually the number and type of complaints and how we have resolved them. We will monitor the impact of this policy and review it at least every three years.

### **Approved by the Directors of NRCDES**

Date: 21 January 2026

Signed: *+ Patrick McKinney*

**Rt Rev Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham (Chair of NRCDES)**

Date for Next Review: January 2029



## APPENDIX 1 – COMPLAINT FORM

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Postcode</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

**Please provide information about the incident you are complaining about** *(including date, time and location of incident, if appropriate).*

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**Please provide information about the specific action or service your complaint relates to**

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**Please provide information about which individual(s) you wish to make a complaint about**

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**Please provide information about what action(s) you are seeking from us in order to resolve the complaint**

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*Please consider if you give consent to share your personal data with any investigating officer or not. Please delete either:*

I give consent for my information held in paper and electronic records in respect of the complaint to be made available to facilitate any investigation. I consent to this confidential and sensitive data to be shared for that specific purpose. I realise that any information held about any third party cannot be shared without their specific consent. Should it be necessary in the view of the investigating officer to seek that third-party consent, I give my approval that they may share sufficient information with that third to enable that person to make an informed choice about whether or not to give consent to sharing that person's information with the investigating officer.

**OR**

I do not give my consent to share my personal data to an investigating officer. I acknowledge that this may limit the scope of the complaint investigation.