

Complaints procedure

Introduction:

1. At St Joseph's Church we encourage a culture of respect, honesty and openness. Our staff team strive to care for individuals and to serve everybody – without discrimination – in a way that will please and honour our Lord Jesus. However, we may sometimes make mistakes and we realise that may be painful for those affected. If you have any concerns or complaints about any member of our church staff or one of the church leaders, please will you let them know? They would love the opportunity to discuss those concerns, to learn from any mistakes made and to preserve the unity of the church.
2. If the staff member involved does not address your initial complaint to your satisfaction, then please let us know by contacting Ken Matthews. If your complaint concerns Ken Matthews, then please let Tom Smyth (church warden and chair of trustees) know. We will try our best to rectify any mistakes.
3. Of course, there may be more serious concerns, either around safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults – in which case you should refer to our safeguarding policy, or is putting you or others in danger, or is illegal or unethical – in which case you should refer to our whistleblowing policy.

Taking it further:

4. If this resolution doesn't solve the problem, then you should raise a formal complaint with the trust. You should raise your concerns in writing with the Senior Minister. If the concern is about any action taken by the senior minister, then you should raise it with the Chair of Trustees.
5. Your complaint should say that you are raising your concerns under the complaints policy and then explain what your concerns are. Include all the key facts, dates, and the names of the people involved.
6. You will be invited to a meeting to discuss your concerns, and you are entitled to be accompanied at this and any subsequent meetings. If you bring a companion, we ask that you both agree to keep your disclosures confidential before and after the meeting and during any investigation that may follow.
7. After the initial meeting, we will investigate your concerns and we may ask you to attend further meetings. To investigate properly, we may involve specialists with particular knowledge or experience of the issues you have raised.

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8. We will keep you informed in general terms about how our investigation is progressing and how long it is likely to take. We may not be able to give you details about the investigation (or any action it leads to) as we need to protect confidentiality and comply with legal obligations. We understand this may be frustrating, and so we will do our best to reassure you that things are in hand and to explain why we are acting in the way we are.
9. Your concerns will be addressed fairly, but we cannot guarantee the outcome of our investigations will be the one you want. If you are not satisfied with how we have conducted the investigations, you can take the matter to the Charity Commission.
10. If you do not feel comfortable in reporting your concern openly, tell us and we will do all we can to protect your identity. We may want to disclose your identity to people involved in the investigation, but we will always discuss this with you first.

Anglican Mission in England code of conduct

11. The Synod of the Anglican Mission in England have approved an updated code of conduct for licensed AMiE Ministers. The code is to ensure appropriate behaviour of the ministers and so that they remain faithful to scripture. If there are any concerns about a minister's conduct that can't be resolved locally, then you should discuss with the Bishop's local contact. Chris Tasker, one of our church wardens, is the local contact for St Joseph's.