



St Thomas à Becket Primary School

Roots to grow, wings to fly.

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing is impossible for you."

Matthew 17:20



Friendship | Respect | Truth | Forgiveness | Thankfulness | Perseverance

You only have one life, one childhood, one opportunity. School is one of the most important experiences you will ever have. At St Thomas à Becket we will stop at nothing to ensure that you are given every chance to succeed. Through our faith and wisdom, we will give you strong roots to grow into resilient, respectful and ambitious citizens. We will open doors so that you can imagine endless possibilities and a life without limits. We will give you wings to fly.

Data Protection Complaints Policy

Non-statutory	
Policy agreed	February 2026
Policy published	February 2026
Reviewed on	N/A
Next review date	February 2028
Approved by	Headteacher
Linked documents	Online Safety Policy Acceptable Use of IT Policy Data Protection Policy Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction

St Thomas à Becket Church of England Aided Primary School (“the School”) is committed to ensuring that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This policy sets out how individuals may raise concerns or complaints specifically relating to data protection, including Subject Access Requests (SARs), and how the School will investigate and respond.

This policy supplements the EQUA Mead Learning Trust Complaints Policy and follows the expectations set out by the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO).

2. Scope

This policy covers complaints relating to:

- The collection, use, storage, sharing, or disposal of personal data
- Alleged non-compliance with UK GDPR or the Data Protection Act 2018
- Data breaches or suspected breaches
- Failure to uphold data subject rights (e.g., rectification, erasure, restriction)
- Delays or concerns relating to Subject Access Requests (SARs)
- Concerns about the School’s data protection practices or decisions

This policy does **not** cover:

- General school complaints (handled under the EQUA Mead Complaints Policy)
- Staff grievances or disciplinary matters
- Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

3. Who Can Make a Data Protection Complaint?

Any individual whose personal data is processed by the School may make a complaint, including:

- Pupils
- Parents or carers
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Visitors or members of the public

A representative may complain on someone’s behalf with appropriate consent.

4. Principles

The School will ensure that all data protection complaints are:

- **Acknowledged promptly and within 30 calendar days**
- **Investigated fairly, objectively, and without bias**
- **Handled in line with ICO expectations**
- **Documented and retained securely**
- **Resolved at the earliest possible stage**

The School will not disadvantage any individual for raising a complaint.

5. How to Make a Data Protection Complaint

Complaints should be submitted **in writing** using the Data Protection Complaint Form (Appendix A) and sent to:

Headteacher

St Thomas à Becket Church of England Aided Primary School
High Street
Tilshead
Wiltshire
SP3 4RZ

Email: head@stthomas.equamead.org

Mark all correspondence **Private and Confidential**.

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, it should be addressed to the **Chair of Governors** via the school office.

6. Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will only be investigated at the discretion of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, in line with the EQUA Mead Complaints Policy.

7. Timescales

- All data protection complaints will be **acknowledged within 30 school days**.
- A full written response will normally be provided within **30 school days**.
- If additional time is required due to complexity, the complainant will be informed and given a revised timescale.

Complaints should normally be raised within **three months** of the incident.

8. Stages of the Data Protection Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where possible, concerns should be raised informally with the Headteacher or Data Protection Lead. A written response will be provided within **30 school days**.

If unresolved, the complainant may proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

A formal complaint must be submitted using the Data Protection Complaint Form.

The Headteacher (or a delegated senior leader) will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within 30 calendar days
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and desired outcomes
- Take **appropriate and proportionate steps to investigate**, including reviewing records, correspondence, data processing activities, and speaking with relevant staff
- Provide a written response within 30 school days

If the complaint concerns the Headteacher, Stage 2 will be conducted by the **Chair of Governors**.

If the complaint concerns the Trust, CEO, or a Trustee, the procedures in the EQUA Mead Complaints Policy apply.

Stage 3 – Panel Hearing

If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, the complainant may request escalation to a Panel Hearing.

Requests must be submitted **within 10 school days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The panel will consist of at least three individuals not previously involved, including one independent member.

The panel may:

- Uphold the complaint (in whole or in part)
- Dismiss the complaint
- Recommend changes to systems or procedures

A written outcome will be provided within **10 school days** of the hearing.

9. Complaints About Subject Access Requests (SARs)

Individuals have the right to request access to their personal data. Complaints may arise where:

- A SAR response is delayed
- Information appears incomplete or missing
- Exemptions have been applied and the individual disagrees
- Identity verification was requested and the individual disputes the need
- The School refuses a SAR and the individual disagrees with the justification

When a SAR-related complaint is received, the School will:

- **Acknowledge the complaint within 30 calendar days**
- Take **appropriate steps to investigate**, including reviewing the SAR handling process, correspondence, deadlines, and any exemptions applied
- Reassess whether the SAR was processed lawfully and within statutory time limits
- Provide a clear written explanation of findings, actions taken, and any corrective measures

If the School identifies that a SAR was not handled correctly, it will take immediate steps to rectify the issue and prevent recurrence.

10. Escalation to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after exhausting the School's procedure, they may escalate to the ICO.

The ICO advises that organisations should be given the opportunity to resolve complaints first.

ICO contact details: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/> (ico.org.uk in Bing)

11. Record Keeping

The School will maintain a secure record of:

- All data protection complaints
- Whether they were resolved informally or formally
- Actions taken and outcomes

Records will be kept confidential except where disclosure is required by law.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every **two years**, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or Trust policy.

Appendix A – Data Protection Complaint Form

St Thomas à Becket Church of England Aided Primary School Data Protection Complaint Form

Your Details

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Are you making this complaint on behalf of someone else? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes:

Name:

Relationship:

Do you have their consent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Nature of the Complaint (Include dates, details of the data involved, and any relevant correspondence.)

Which data protection rights or principles do you believe have been breached?

What outcome are you seeking?

Have you previously raised this concern informally? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please provide details:

Declaration I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
Signature:

Date: