

# Complaints Policy

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school has procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with this policy. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned should contact the Chair of Governors.

### **Aims and objectives**

Our 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 child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### **The Complaints Process**

#### **Stage 1: Informal Complaints**

- Parents / carers and others should raise complaints or concerns initially with the child's Class Teacher. Parents will be encouraged to make prior arrangements to discuss any issues that are not of a routine nature.
- If a parent / carer believes that the complaint or concern is more serious or sensitive they should speak with the Head Teacher, who will then investigate, and then report back in writing or, more usually at this informal stage, through an interview with the complainant.
- Although parents are encouraged to raise their concerns with other staff, we recognise that parents may, on occasion, bring their complaint to the attention of the LEA, by telephoning, or writing to the Local Education Officer or other LEA officers. In such cases, school staff will work with the LEA in order to resolve the problem through explanation and/or contact/discussion with the parents and the school.
- Every effort will be made to resolve the problem at the informal stage. This will be done within a period of 7 days. Complainants who remain dissatisfied at this stage will be informed that they have the opportunity to make a formal complaint.
- In some cases, matters affecting general school policy may be judged by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Governors, to be an appropriate area for discussion at Governing Body level, in order to resolve the complaint.

#### **Stage 2: Formal Complaints**

- Formal complaints should be made in writing and will normally be investigated by the Head Teacher in the first instance. If the complaint directly concerns the Head Teacher complainants should directly contact the Chair of Governors, who will consult with the LEA
- Any other Governors in receipt of complaints will refer them immediately to the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, as appropriate, and without becoming further involved in any way themselves.
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Head Teacher's response, they should contact the Chair of Governors, or the Local Education Officer who will consult with each other over how the complaint should be further pursued.
- The Chair of Governors will determine the method of further investigation and of the formal response to the complainant. The Local Education Officer will be available to advise the Chair of Governors over the investigation and response.
- If written complaints are received by the LEA the Local Education Officer will investigate the complaint in consultation with the Head Teacher and/or the Chair of Governors. In circumstances when the Local Education Officer has been extensively involved at an early stage, the Director of Childrens' Services will be asked to arrange for another Education Officer to advise the Chair of Governors in order to ensure an independent approach.
- The complainant will receive a written response to his / her complaint. A meeting may also be arranged to convey the response to the complainant.
- In some cases, a complaint may lead to disciplinary action against an individual, for which there are separate procedures Under the Governing Body's disciplinary procedures, the outcome of these procedures is confidential.

**Stage 3: Appeal**

- If the complainant remains dissatisfied after Stage 2 investigation, complainants may appeal to the Grievance Panel of the Governing Body for a final resolution if their complaint.
- If complainants remain dissatisfied following a response from the governors, they may take their complaint to the LGO.