



Policy:

Complaints

Adopted: May 2012

Member of staff responsible: Head Teacher

Review Date: Summer term 2017

Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

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

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 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.

3. The complaints process

How to share a concern

3.1 If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child 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 child's progress.

What to do if the matter is not resolved through informal discussion

3.2 Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the head teacher. The head teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Sharing a concern about the head teacher

3.3 Should a parent have a complaint about the head teacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below. A list of governor names is available from the school office.

How to take the matter further

3.4 Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. For this purpose the governing body must identify a complaints panel which will have a maximum of 3 members, including one who is independent of the management of the school. The panel will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her complaint in more detail. The

person complaining may bring a friend or other representative to the meeting. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting. This meeting will be minuted by a clerk and minutes made available to the complainant

After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

Who to appeal to next

3.5 If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the Academy Trust. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the Academy Trust. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

3.6 If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

4. Monitoring and review

4.1 The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

5.1 In addition the complaints panel may make findings and recommendations and will ensure that a copy of the findings and recommendations are sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about.

Any findings or recommendations will be made available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher.

5.2 Written records will be kept of all complaints, indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.

5.3 Correspondence, statements and records of complaints will be kept confidential.

(Please note that this does not apply to the requirement of the school to provide parents and other interested parties with information about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding year, nor to inspectors conducting inspection under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, or to the Secretary of State, should they ask for access to such records.)