

# Lowick and Holy Island C. of E. First Schools

## Concerns and Complaints Procedure

### Introduction

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing general complaints.

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to provide a safe and rich learning environment in which children can work and grow. Lowick and Holy Island C. of E. First Schools (for the purpose of this document to be known as the school) seek to promote and sustain a positive and effective working relationship with its parent body.

### Aims

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

### Complaints Procedure

Most complaints are best dealt with informally. If there are any concerns about the school or the education provided, the matter will be discussed with the child's teacher/tutor/Assistant Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

#### *Stage 1 - informal*

If the concern has not been addressed through discussion with the child's teacher/tutor/Assistant Headteacher, or that the concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, an appointment should be made to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and most complaints can be resolved at this stage.

#### *Stage 2 – formal*

If the matter cannot be resolved, or the complaint is about the Headteacher (The decision that the Headteacher has made as a result of the complaint does not become a complaint about the Headteacher) then it will be necessary for the complainant to formally complain to the Chair of Governors in writing. The nature of the complaint should be stated, with identified steps and actions that could be considered to remedy the concerns. The Chair of Governors will review the way in which the school has handled the complaint and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. The Chair will write with the outcome of this process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

As we are two separate schools:

- If the complaint is school specific then it should only go to the Chair of Governors of that school.
- If the complaint is about the two schools then a letter must be sent to each Chair of Governors setting out the complaint for their particular school (They can only deal with complaints regarding their specific school)

#### *Stage 3 – formal*

If the complainant is not satisfied with the result then the complainant can refer to Stage 3 of the procedure. At this Stage, a panel of 3 governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a

final decision about it on behalf of the governing body. The panel will consist of governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

The complainant will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend part of the meeting, accompanied by a friend/partner if wished, to put the case. The head teacher will be given the same opportunities.

After the meeting:

The Governors' Complaints Panel will write to all concerned within 10 school days to explain their decision and suggest a resolution to the problem, if appropriate. The decision of the Governor's Complaints Panel is final.

The decision of the Governors' Complaints Panel will not be investigated. If, however, the complainant feels that the School and Governors have not followed the school's complaints procedure correctly, he/she can contact a Children's Services Officer at Northumberland County Council for assistance.

### **Consideration by the LA**

Complaints received by the LA will only be considered if they are covered by the statutory requirements. (Curriculum, Sex Education, Admissions, Exclusions, SEN, Child Protection) In all other cases complaints must be handled by the schools own Complaints Procedure.

### **Monitoring and review**

The governing body monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher records all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors are informed on an annual basis of any formal complaints received by the school and governors also review this complaints procedure document on a bi-annual basis.

### **Availability**

A copy of this procedure is available to all parents on request and it is available on the school website.