



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

- 1.1 We strive to provide a good education for all our children. On the basis of our vision and values, the Head teacher and 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 or guardians. This policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.
- 1.2 If any parents are unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or have any concerns relating to the school, we encourage them to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.
- 1.3 We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the education authority. If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the education authority, Hertfordshire County Council.
- 1.4 Parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

2 Aims

- 2.1 On the basis of our vision and values, 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. In all cases we put the interests of the child above all else. We aim to provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The complaints procedure

Stage 1

- 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. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All the teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.
- 3.2 Where parents feel 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 by this stage.

Stage 2

- 3.3 Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made. 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.
- 3.4 The Chair of Governors must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt and arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, inviting the person making it to attend the meeting so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school aims to give the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.
- 3.5 After hearing all the evidence, the Chair of Governors will make their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The Chair of Governors will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.
- 3.6 If the complainant is still not satisfied, a panel will be set up consisting of at least three non-parent governors and an independent clerk. This panel will hear the case of the parent and any others concerned (e.g. a teacher) and after the hearing is completed they will make a decision which will be conveyed to the complainant within five working days.

In Summary:

Stage 1

1. Parent/Carer should discuss their concerns with the class teacher.
2. If unresolved, the parent/carer should make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the Head teacher and the Head teacher will investigate the complaint.

Stage 2

3. If still unresolved, the complainant will write to the Chair of Governors outlining the complaint.
4. The complainant will be invited to discuss the complaint with the Chair of Governors.
5. If this still fails to resolve the complaint a complaints panel will be set up consisting of three non-parent governors and including an independent clerk.

6. If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of the complaints panel they may, in the case of a pupil who is on the SEND register, appeal to the education authority, for other pupils an appeal can be made to the Secretary of State for Education.

Complaints against the Head teacher

- 3.7 Should any parent have a complaint about the Head teacher, they 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 the parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.
- 3.8 If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the education authority. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the education authority. A meeting will be arranged and chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.
- 3.9 If the 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 regularly 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 will take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy.

Date established by governing body: January 2009

Date of full implementation: January 2009

Date for review: Biannual. Most recent review: May 2022

Next review: May 2024