

We believe that our school provides a good education for all children, and that the headteacher 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.

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

How to share a concern

If a parent is concerned about anything related to the education provided by the 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

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

Should a parent have a complaint about the head teacher, s/he should first approach one of the members of the governing body, who is then 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.

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How to take the matter further

A formal complaint should only be made to the governing body if an informal complaint fails to be resolved. 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 Proprietor and Lead Representative Parent.

The Proprietor and governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. They will then arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invite the person making it to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain her concerns in more detail in front of a panel. The panel must be composed of one staff member, one board member and one member of the parent body who are not involved in the matter of the complaint. The complainant can be accompanied by a friend at the hearing if s/he wishes. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence and after careful consideration, the panel will communicate its decision in writing to the parent. The panel does all in its power at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

Who to appeal to next

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the Local Education Authority. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LEA. 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.

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.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The panel monitors 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. All correspondence is kept confidential.

This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

*This document was written in reference to Part 7 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended by the Independent School Standards Regulations 2012).
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2010/1997/contents/made>*