

# Parents/Carers Complaints Policy

July 2014

**Date Policy Approved:** July 2014

**Date Policy to be Reviewed:** July 2017

## Aims and Expectations

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteachers and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parent/carers. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parent/carers.

The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

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 and effectively 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.

If a parent/carer 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. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school and are making good progress so they feel it is vital to be notified immediately of any problems. It is of paramount importance for them to act accordingly, with immediate effect, to prevent a negative impact on the child's progress.

The process for handling complaints is described below.

## The Complaints Process

1. If a parent/carer is concerned about anything relating to the education that we are providing at our school they should, in the first instance, discuss this with their child's class teacher. It may be necessary to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet to discuss the parent/carer's concern. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. If the complaint is against a teacher or a Headteacher or another member of staff, please refer to point 3.
2. Where a parent/carer feels that a situation or complaint has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Phase Leader. The

Phase Leader will carry out a thorough investigation where necessary and report the outcome of their investigation to the parent/carer via a letter. Where appropriate, a meeting may be scheduled with the parent/carer to explain the outcome. This meeting will be summarised in a letter to the parent/carer.

3. If a parent/carer has a complaint that they believe is of a sufficiently serious nature e.g. a complaint against a teacher, or they are dissatisfied with the response to a complaint after point 2, the parent/carer should make an appointment to meet with a Headteacher of the school (Mrs Stef Habershon KS1, Ms Meryl Blackburn KS2). This meeting will be minuted by the Federation PA. The Headteacher considers parent/carer complaints a serious matter; they will investigate the complaint thoroughly and provide an outcome of this to the parent/carer within 10 working days from the date of the initial meeting. The outcome will be presented to the parent/carer in writing. It may be appropriate for the Headteacher to schedule a meeting with the parent/carer to explain the outcome. This meeting will be minuted and summarised in a letter to the parent/carer.
4. If the parent/carer is dissatisfied with the response given by the Headteacher, he/she should put in writing a formal complaint to the Executive Headteacher (Mr David Watson). This meeting will be minuted by the Federation PA. The Headteacher considers parent/carer complaints a serious matter; they will investigate the complaint thoroughly and provide an outcome of this to the parent/carer within 10 working days from the date of the initial meeting. The outcome will be presented to the parent/carer in writing. It may be appropriate for the Headteacher to schedule a meeting with the parent/carer to explain the outcome. This meeting will be minuted and summarised in a letter to the parent/carer.
5. If the parent/carer is dissatisfied with the response given by the Executive Headteacher, he/she should put in writing a formal complaint to the Complaints Panel of the school (marked for the attention of the Federation PA). The Complaints Panel is made up of three governors who have not been involved in the individual complaint. The Federation PA will contact you to arrange a suitable time for a meeting to discuss your complaint. This meeting will be minuted by the Federation PA. The Complaints Panel will undertake a full and thorough investigation and respond to the parent/carer in writing within 10 working days from the date the complaint letter was received. The response will be presented in writing to the parent/carer. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Complaints Panel to meet with the parent/carer to explain the outcome. This meeting will be minuted and summarised in writing to the parent/carer.
6. Should an initial complaint be against a Headteacher or Executive Headteacher, a formal complaint should be put in writing to the Complaints Panel of the School (marked for the attention of the Federation PA) clearly outlining your complaint. The same process in point 5 will be followed.
7. If the parent/carer is dissatisfied with the response given by the Complaints Panel, the parent/carer should put in writing why they want to appeal the decision made by the Complaints Panel (please see the **Appeals Process**).

*All minutes from meetings will be made available to you upon request.*

## **Appeals process**

Only if the Executive Headteacher/Complaints Panel fail to resolve the matter of the parent/carer complaint, a formal complaint (or reason for appeal for an Executive Headteacher complaint) should be made in writing to the Appeals Panel at the school no later than 10 days from the date the response was received from the Headteacher or Complaints Panel. Your letter should be addressed to the Federation PA and marked 'Private and Confidential'.

The Federation PA will contact the Head of the Appeals Panel to notify them of a request to an appeal. The Appeals Panel is made up of 3 of the Federation Governors who have not been involved in this individual complaint at any stage (or members of the Complaints Panel for Headteacher/Executive Headteacher complaints). The Federation PA will contact the parent/carer in writing, within 5 working days, to acknowledge receipt of the parent/carers' letter and confirm the date in which the appeals meeting will be held. You will be expected to attend this meeting.

After the Appeals Meeting, you will receive the final decision in writing within 10 working days.

In some cases, there may be times when the response timeframe of 10 working days is exceeded depending on availability of all persons involved including the parent/carer. In these cases, response times will be reviewed during the course of the investigation.

**What can you do if you are still unhappy?**

You can contact the DfE (Department for Education) at:

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

General enquiries: 0370 000 2288

There is a section on the website for School Complaints.