

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Purpose**

1. To ensure that a high quality of education is provided at all times.
2. Welcome suggestions and to encourage continuous improvements in the service we provide.

### **General**

1. All complaints shall be taken seriously.
2. All complaints shall be regarded as constructive.
3. All complaints shall be handled in confidence.

### **Responsibility**

1. Teacher/Supervisor/Head Teacher to listen to the concerns of parents. (Informal resolution of complaints.)
2. Head teacher to arrange the procedure as listed under the formal complaints, if the complaints are still not resolved.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage one - Informal resolution of complaints**

##### **Time Scale**

There are no specific time scales for dealing with concerns at this stage. However, as at all stages, issues should be considered and dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible.

1. Any parent who wishes to discuss any aspect of the school should do so in the first instance with the teacher/supervisor.
2. The teacher/supervisor shall listen to the concerns of the parent and try to reach an amicable understanding.
3. If the parent is still concerned with any aspect or the situation arises again he/she shall be referred to the Head Teacher.

#### **Stage 2 - Referral to the Head Teacher**

Before proceeding with a formal investigation, the Head Teacher will meet with the individual and discuss their concerns and wishes. It may still be appropriate and satisfactory to reach an informal resolution at this point.

By this stage it must be clear that the concern is a definite complaint which will be dealt with according to this policy and should be formally submitted in writing to the Head Teacher.

Note: All complainants have the right to submit formal complaints, at this or any stage, which have been written by another individual on their behalf.

#### **Submitting a formal complaint-acknowledgement and time scales**

The Head Teacher should formally acknowledge the complaint within 5 schools days of receiving it and begin an investigation.

## **The Investigation**

1. A meeting shall be held with the parents and the Head Teacher. Both parents and the Head Teacher may have a third person present if required.
2. A written record of the meeting shall be kept and actions agreed.
3. The Head Teacher will provide the complainant with a full written response within 10 school days of acknowledging it. This response will determine whether or not the complaint has been upheld, the reasons why and what action (if any) will be taken.
4. If the complaint is still unresolved then stage 3 proceedings are to be referred to.

## **Stage 3 - The Complaints Committee Panel Hearing**

1. The Head Teacher will arrange for a hearing before a panel of at least 3 people who are not directly involved in previous consideration of the complaint.
2. The complainant should receive an acknowledgement within 5 school days of Stage 3 proceedings being referred to. The letter will inform them that their complaint will be heard by a complaints panel hearing within 25 school days of the date of the letter. All parties will receive prior notice within 10 school days of the hearing date.
3. In the panel hearing, one person on the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school. The Head Teacher will be responsible for the appointment of the panel. Note that parents can have somebody to accompany them to the hearing.
4. The panel will make findings and recommendations, and ensure that the complainant, Head Teacher and, where relevant, the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations. This should be done within 21 school days after the hearing date.
5. Written records will be kept of all complaints and their outcomes, whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceed to a panel hearing.
6. In respect of concerns relating to the welfare and abuse of a child the Child Protection Policy shall be referred to and the appropriate action taken.