



Parkwood
Primary School

Complaints Procedure Policy October 2021

Reviewed: October 2021
Ratified by Governors: November 2021
Review: Every Two Years
Date of Next Review: October 2023

Coordinator		Nominated Governor	
Headteacher		Date	
Chair of Governing Body		Date	

Introduction

Complaints Policy Status: Statutory

At Parkwood Primary School, we strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

If any parents or carers 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.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the DFE. If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint, those concerned can refer the matter to the DFE complaints process, having followed the complaints procedure as detailed in this document.

All parents and carers have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

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 and fairly as possible, seeking the correct evidence. 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 provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

The complaints process should be used as fully as possible, with an understanding that this is in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Parents and the Code of Conduct for Staff, as well as the Unreasonable Complaints Policy. It should be conducted in a way which seeks resolution and prioritises the children involved. During the process, other school policies may be referred to in order to give clarification and the school will do all it can to be transparent and provide all relevant information.

The Complaints Process

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 teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and are 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.

Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, they should then make an appointment to discuss it with the Year Leader or the most relevant member of Senior Staff (this may for instance, be the SENDCO). Many complaints are usually resolved at this stage. A record of this discussion will be made by the Senior Member of Staff and then passed to the Deputy Headteacher.

Where parents or carers feel that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature or if the previous stages of the complaints procedure have not resolved the issue, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Deputy Headteacher. The Deputy Headteacher will record the complaint and discussion fully. A record of this discussion will be made by the Deputy Headteacher. If the complaint is not resolved at this point it would be considered formal and would then need to be put in writing to the Headteacher. An acknowledgment of this will be sent by The Headteacher, via the school office, within three working days of the complaint being received by The Headteacher.

Where parents or carers feel that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, or if their concerns have failed to be resolved at stage 3.3 by the Deputy Headteacher, they should put this in writing (as detailed above). This can be in the form of an email. This would be considered a formal complaint. This will result in an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly in order to establish a balance of probability based on the evidence available. All complaints are normally resolved by this stage. A record of this discussion will be made by the Headteacher and a written response, following an investigation will be sent within 10 working days following the initial acknowledgment of the complaint.

Should any parents or carers have a complaint about the Headteacher, or if they feel that a complaint has not been adequately dealt with up to point 3.4 or if they feel the Headteacher has not followed the Complaints Procedure fully or fairly, they can make a formal complaint to the Chair of Governors. This complaint must be made in writing in the form of a confidential letter, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The envelope should be addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body and sent via the school office, marked "for the urgent attention of the Chair of Governors". The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the letter as soon as possible after delivery. If the Chair of Governor's has prior knowledge of the circumstances surrounding a complaint, they may delegate any investigation to another Governor.

The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It may arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, if it feels this will help resolve the issue. This meeting will be with a panel of Governors and the person making the complaint will be invited to attend the meeting, so that s/he can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence, the panel of governors will consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction. A response to the

parent, following the investigation, will be made within ten working days of initial acknowledgment by the Chair of Governors.

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the DFE complaints process. Further information about this process is available from the school. 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 and Skills.

Monitoring and Review

The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. A log is kept by the Headteacher of any complaints that are made to him/her, about the school, and s/he records how they were resolved. Governors are informed of any complaints received at regular meetings of the Governing Body.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents and carers, so that they can be properly

Complaints Policy – Procedure for making a complaint

If you wish to make a complaint about an aspect of the school, please follow the procedure set out below:-

IN SUMMARY – THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IS AS FOLLOWS

Stage 1 – Class Teacher

You do not have to make a formal complaint if you are unhappy with any aspect of the school. The people who can best deal with any problems are the class teachers. Let them know if something is wrong and they will try to sort it out straight away if possible.

Stage 2 – Year Leader or most relevant Senior Leader

Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher they should then make an appointment to discuss it with the Year Leader or the most relevant Senior Leader. A number of complaints are usually resolved at this stage.

Stage 3 – Deputy Headteacher

Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher or by the Year Leader or most relevant Senior Leader, they should then make an appointment to discuss it with the Deputy Headteacher. Many complaints are usually resolved at this stage.

Stage 4 – Headteacher

If parents or carers feel that their concern is still unresolved, or is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher, following a the complaint being put in writing (this can be by email). The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. All complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Stage 5 – Chair of Governors

Should any parents or carers feel that their complaint is still not resolved to their satisfaction, or if they have a complaint about the Headteacher, they can complain to the Chair of the Governing Body. This complaint must be made in writing, as a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The procedures used by the governors to investigate a complaint are detailed in the Complaints Policy (see section 3.5).

Stage 6 – DFE Complaints Process

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the DFE complaints process. Further information about this process is available from the school. 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.