

Greenwood Primary School

Complaints Policy

1. AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

The school's policy is to ensure that the highest possible standards exist. The school aims to achieve this by:

- Continually seeking to raise standards of achievement
- Having high expectations
- Promoting effective teaching and learning
- Promoting effective communication between the school and with parents and the wider community

When problems occur or difficulties arise, the school will seek to deal promptly, effectively and fairly with any complaints.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The complaints policy and procedures will allow the school to:

- Improve communications by listening to the views of pupils, parents, staff , the local and wider community
- Strengthen the partnership between pupils, parents , staff and the Governing bodies
- Identify opportunities to improve on standards and to meet expectations
- Provide redress where a complaint is found to have substance

3. GUIDELINES

How a complaint can be made

Complaints may be made in person, by telephone or in writing. A person with a complaint should normally seek to contact the member of staff responsible for the relevant issue. However, all staff will endeavour to seek help, even when the issue is not that individual's area of responsibility. Care will be taken to:

- Clarify the nature of the complaint
- Clarify the outcomes sought
- Check whether the person making a complaint requires support of any kind, for example with language difficulties
- Explain the complaints procedure

The school does not wish to receive anonymous complaints and will not undertake to act on any information received in this way.

Code of Conduct

There is an expectation that all staff dealing with a person making a complaint will act in a courteous and respectful manner. All complaints will be taken as a matter for serious concern. The school also expects the person making the complaint will also conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. At every stage of the complaints procedure all correspondence, statements and records of complaints must be kept confidential. **Aggressive behaviour towards a member of staff will not be tolerated under any circumstances.**

Informal Complaint Procedure

An informal complaint is usually an initial approach by an individual to the school expressing dissatisfaction. Informal complaints may be resolved quickly and simply and often do not involve detailed or lengthy investigation.

A person with an informal complaint will normally seek to contact the member of staff responsible for the relevant issue via the office of the Deputy Head Teacher. If the complaint is not resolved at this stage, then the person making the complaint will be referred to the Headteacher by the authority of the Deputy Head. It is anticipated that at all stages a written record will be kept and remain confidential to those involved.

If these informal discussions do not resolve the situation then a meeting may be called by the Headteacher. This meeting will aim to resolve the issue and involve all parties involved in the complaint. When the complaints cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be made.

Formal Complaint Procedure

Stage One:

A complaint becomes formal when it is put in writing to the Headteacher. The complaint form attached to this policy can be used or the complainant may write a letter. An acknowledgement will be sent. The Head teacher (with support from the Deputy Head) will investigate the circumstances thoroughly and impartially. A written response will be issued within 10 school days of the complaint being received.

Stage Two:

If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome or the progress being made, then an appeal may be made in writing, to the Chair of Governors, who can be contacted via the school.

If the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved after discussion with the Chair of Governors, then the complaint committee will investigate the complaint.

The Governing Committee will act impartially to ensure that all parties involved in the complaint have the opportunity to present their case to three people who are independent of the complaint, bringing with them one person from outside the school if they feel it is necessary. The complaints panel hearing will take place within 10 school days of the Governing Committee being contacted.

The Remit of the Complaint Appeal Panel

The panel will:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part
- Uphold the complaint in sole or in part
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint
- Recommend changes to the school's system or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The panel will be clerked.

The panel will follow the Checklist for a panel hearing (in appendix)

A decision of the panel will be given in writing to the person making the complaint within 10 school days of the hearing. It will include findings and any recommendations.

The decision will also be received in writing by the Headteacher the Deputy Head and where relevant those persons involved.

External Review

If the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied after the matter has been considered by the appointed panel, then they will be asked to contact the Local Education Authority.

1. Annual Review

The Governing Committee will monitor and review annually the nature of formal complaints, and the school's response to them, to ensure that the school is effectively meeting the expectations of parents and the local community.

2. Publicising the Procedure

The school will include reference to the procedure in the:

- School prospectus
- Information given to new parents when their children join the school

Review: October 2017

Checklist for a Panel Hearing

The panel needs to take the following points into account:

- The hearing is as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint, and be followed by their witnesses.
- The Headteacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Headteacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the Headteacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The Headteacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The Chair explains that both parties will hear from the panel within a set time scale.

Complaints Form

Please complete and return to the Headteacher who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint.
(Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?