

HOBBAYNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY SUMMARY



Concerns, Complaints and Conciliation Procedure for Parents/Carers

This policy sets out how the school intends to resolve the concerns and complaints of parents/carers in a fair and agreed manner. These might be about any aspect of the service the school provides in relation to teaching and learning or its management. A concern or complaint may be resolved by an explanation, an apology; an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or an undertaking to review school policies. It is our aim that concerns and complaints be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, in a consistent way, respecting people's desire for confidentiality and ensuring a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary.

The Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Concern/Complaint

The school hopes that most concerns/complaints can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction informally whenever possible by informal discussion with the staff member concerned through meetings, phone conversations, notes, letters or emails. We aim to deal with concerns and complaints promptly and thoroughly. Wherever possible, parents/carers should try to raise concerns with the school as soon as possible after an incident so that it can be dealt with effectively. Anonymous concerns/complaints will be dealt with at the school's discretion, depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern/complaint. Adults are asked to respect the confidentiality of those involved in the concern or complaint, and to be good role models for children when discussing concerns/complaints with each other. If a parent/carer feels that their concern or complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed by the member of staff they have raised it with, they are encouraged to approach a member of the school's Leadership Team or Senior Leadership Team for support in resolving the issue informally.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if it is of a very serious nature, parents can complain formally using the school's 'Complaint Form' or by a letter of complaint to the Headteacher. If the complaint is actually about the Headteacher, the form or letter should be addressed to the Chair of Governors. The school will help parents to fill in the Complaints Form if required. Where appropriate, arrangements for interpreting will be made.

The school will acknowledge the formal complaint within two school days. It will then investigate and parents will receive a formal written response within five school days or, if the investigation is prolonged, a letter to advise them of progress made. The response will detail the decision reached, the reasons for it and any action taken or to be taken. Parents will then be offered an opportunity to discuss the contents of the formal written response with the Headteacher. If the parent/carer is still unhappy with the outcome, they may want to progress to Stage 3 of this Procedure.

Stage 3: Formal Governing Body Complaints Panel

If the parent/carer still not satisfied, they should put the complaint in writing formally to the governing body for consideration by a complaints panel. Where this is not practicable then the complaint can be made verbally. Where appropriate, arrangements for interpreting should be made.

The complaints panel will meet within six school weeks and will be made up of three governors who have not previously been involved with the complaint, do not know the complainant personally and have no other interest in the complaint.

Two weeks before the panel sits, both parties will submit written evidence. At the hearing, the panel will interview the headteacher and the complainant, both of whom are entitled to be accompanied by a 'friend' who can speak on their behalf. The panel will reach its decision within eight school days and then notify the complainant, the headteacher and the Chair of Governors of its decision. This decision is final. If the complainant is still not satisfied s/he can take the matter to the Local Authority or the Secretary of State for Education, whose role would be to scrutinise the procedures followed by the school in investigating the complaint and make sure the parent/carers rights have not been compromised.

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