



COMPLAINTS POLICY

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| Status | Statutory | Date created | September 2008 |
| Any other statutory names for this policy (where applicable) | | Date first approved | 13 October 2008 |
| Responsibility for this policy (job title) | Headteacher | Date last reviewed | Jan 2016 |
| Governors' Committee with responsibility for its review | Personnel Sub Committee | Frequency of review | Every 3 years |
| Tick here if Bucks Policy attached in its entirety | | To be put on the school website? (Yes/No) | Yes |
| Approval necessary | Whole Governing Body | | |

Introduction

We try to work to very high standards; we try not to make mistakes. However, if you do have a complaint, please let us know as soon as possible. We will make every possible effort to deal with your complaint quickly and to resolve the problem to your satisfaction. We will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly.

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints. This policy applies to the day-to-day running of the school, the interpretation of school policies, the actions or inactions of staff at the school, school policies as determined by the governing body, the actions or inactions of the governing body, the Headteacher.

Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning the curriculum, collective worship, admissions, exclusion appeals, decisions about your daughter's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Details of these procedures can be obtained from the school.

The complaints procedure is a four stage process with 1 informal and 3 formal stages as outlined below.

Aims and Objectives

We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy.

Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 – informal

Most complaints are best dealt with informally. If parents have any general concerns about the school or the education provided, they should discuss the matter with their daughter's Head of Year at the earliest opportunity. For concerns about a specific subject, they should discuss the matter with the relevant Subject Team Leader. If the complaint relates to use of the facilities by a community or private organisation, the matter should be discussed with the Facilities Manager.

Stage 2 – formal

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through initial discussion, or that the concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, please put your complaint in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and most complaints can be resolved at this stage.

If the matter is about:

- the day-to-day running of the school
- the interpretation of school policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at the school

it will be investigated by the Headteacher or a senior member of staff nominated by the Headteacher.

If the matter is about:

- school policies as determined by the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the governing body
- the Headteacher

then it will be investigated by a governor nominated by the Chairman.

At this stage, the person investigating the complaint will:

- Establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved
- Clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- Meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary)
- Clarify what the complainant feels would put things right
- Interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning
- Keep notes of the interview. The school should be in the position to produce documentary evidence that the complaint has received fair and proper consideration within the school's procedure.

Stage 3 – formal

If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, or your complaint is about the Headteacher, then it may be appropriate for you to write to the Chairman of Governors. Please state the nature of the complaint, the steps taken to resolve it so far and the action you would like to see taken to remedy your concerns.

The Chairman of Governors will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the school and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He/she will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 working days (in term time) of receiving the complaint.

At all stages, confidentiality is important in handling the complaint as it could lead to the implementation of a personnel procedure.

A complaint is distinct from any formal disciplinary procedure. If it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by following the appropriate procedure and not the complaints procedure.

You will be notified if this is the case with your complaint but, because of confidentiality, you will not be informed of which procedure applies or of any final outcome.

If you are not satisfied with the result, you may ask to refer your complaint to Stage 4 of the procedure.

Stage 4 – Formal

At this stage, a panel of governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the governing body. The panel will consist of governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days (in term time) of your request.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend part of the meeting, accompanied by a third party if wished, to put your case. The Headteacher will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within five working days of the meeting.

The decision of the panel is final. If you are still not satisfied, you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

Monitoring

The governing body (Personnel Committee) monitors the complaints procedure.