

Holy Family R.C. Primary School, Limeside, Oldham.



School Complaints Procedure

Overview

From 1st September 2003 Governing Bodies of all maintained schools and maintained nursery schools in England are required, under section 29 of the Education Act 2002, to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or service that the school provides.

Introduction

We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The Headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationship with all parents and carers. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or carers. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school should follow in such cases.

If any of the 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 class teacher immediately. (An appointment may be made before or after the school day).

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures laid down by the Local Authority (LA). If the school itself cannot resolve a complaint those concerned can refer the matter to the LA.

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 as possible. We aim to resolve any complaints through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, we put the interest of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed and then resolved.

Stage 1 – Complaint heard by Staff member usually class teacher

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 is 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.

If a member of staff directly involved feels too compromised to deal with a complaint, the complaint may be referred to another staff member. The member of staff will usually be more senior in responsibility: The ability to consider the complaint objectively and impartially is crucial. Where the complaint concerns the Headteacher the complainants may refer the matter directly to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 2 – Complaint heard by Headteacher

Where parents or carers feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an **appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher.** The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Stage 3 Complaint heard by Governing Body complaint appeal panel

If parents or carers are dissatisfied with the outcome at stage 2 and feel the issue is unresolved a formal complaint may be made to the Chair of Governors.

The complainant needs to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The Governing Body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. However, where further investigations are necessary, new time limits can be set and the complainant sent details of the new deadline and an explanation for the delay.

A meeting will be convened to discuss the complaint, and the complainant will be invited to attend so that he/she can explain in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days notice of the meeting.

The Governors appeal hearing is the last school based stage of the complaints process. Individual complaints will not be heard by the whole Governing Body.

The Remit of the Complaints Appeal Panel

The panel can;

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or 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 occur again.

After hearing all the evidence, the Governors will consider their decision and inform the parent or carer about it in writing within seven days.

If the complaint is not resolved the Local Authority Complaint and Representations Officer may offer further intervention strategies, or form of mediation or review that may be available to the school and the complainant in order to resolve the situation. The Local Government Ombudsmen Officer (LGO) currently looks into complaints about education matters that are the responsibility of a Local Authority, and may be able to support the complainant if they remain dissatisfied with complaints process.

The Apprenticeship Skills, Children and Learning Audit Act 2009 received Royal Assent, November 2009. This act gives the Local Government Ombudsman the power to resolve complaints which it has not been possible to resolve at school level.

Oldham's current Complaints and Representations officer is:
Direct Line: 0161 770 1129

Janet Francis

Email: janet.francis@oldham.gov.uk

Monitoring and review

The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school, and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on a termly basis.

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 informed about the complaints process.

This policy and general procedures will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Signed: A Booth

Date: 07/09/21

Review Date: September 2022