

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

We welcome suggestions for improving our work in school. Be assured no matter what you want to tell us, our support and respect for your child will not be affected in any way. Please tell us of your concern as soon as possible as it is difficult for us to investigate an incident or problem if it took place some time previously. We do appreciate the assistance we receive from parents in addressing any problems that arise.

We receive very few complaints. Problems sometimes arise from misunderstandings, which are easily addressed. Most concerns and complaints can be sorted out quickly by speaking with your child's class teacher. When parents and teachers treat each other with mutual respectful support, this provides a very good role model for all our children.

If, having spoken to the class teacher, you still have concerns, you should speak to the Headteacher. He will investigate the problem and discuss his findings with you so that we can find a way forward together which serves the interest of both the school and your child. In the unlikely event of the problem remaining unresolved, you can put your complaint in writing if necessary, and could subsequently refer it to the Chair of Governors.

The procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made is summarised in the following stages:

#### **Stage 1: INFORMAL ACTION**

- Parents discuss concerns with the class teacher
- The teacher/member of staff logs the complaint on the specified pro-forma, which is then handed in to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher logs the complaint in the Complaints Log
- If the teacher is unable to deal immediately with the matter, a clear note including the complainant's name, phone number and date, should be sent to the parent as soon as the matter has been investigated.
- The teacher ensures that the parent is clear what action or monitoring situation has been agreed.
- If no satisfactory solution has been found, parents are asked if they wish the concern to be considered further.

#### **Stage 2: REFERRAL TO THE HEADTEACHER**

- The Headteacher acknowledges the complaint, orally or in writing, within 3 working days.
- A meeting is arranged with the complainant to clarify any supplementary information given.

- The Headteacher investigates further, interviewing witnesses as appropriate. If the complaint centres on a pupil, the pupil would normally be interviewed with a parent present, or, if this is not possible, with a member of staff who is involved.
- The Headteacher keeps written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.
- Once all relevant facts have been established, the Headteacher responds to the complaint. If the complaint was in writing, a written response will be sent.
- If the complaint is against the Headteacher, the Stage 2 procedures are carried to the Education Director at the British Union Conference.

**Stage 3: Review by the Governing Body:**

- The chair acknowledges receipt of the written complaint, informing the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by a committee of three members of the School's Governing Body and/or an independent headteacher from a local school in the Seventh-day Adventist network within 20 working days.
- The chair arranges to convene a complaints panel elected from members of the governing body. The members should have no prior involvement with the complaint and they should elect a chair for the committee. All relevant documentation regarding the complaint should be given to the members of the committee as soon as possible.
- The Chair of the Committee will write and inform all concerned of the time and place of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance. The notice to the complainant should also inform him/her of the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend and the right to submit further written evidence.
- It is the responsibility of the chair of the committee to ensure that there are accurate minutes of the meeting.
- A record is kept of all complaints, and whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.
- After the meeting the committee will consider the evidence and a written response with the findings and recommendations will be sent to the Headteacher, the complainant and the person being complained about within 15 working days.
- All correspondence, statements, and records are filed in the 'complaints file' and are kept strictly confidential.

**Complaints direct to Ofsted**

Parents can contact Ofsted at any time with a complaint at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-us>