

Woodland Community Primary School

Complaints Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1** We believe that Woodland Community School provides a high quality education for all our children. The head teacher together with all staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents, carers and members of our community.
- 1.2** It is statutory for all schools to have procedures in place to deal with complaints. This policy sets out the procedure that Woodland Community School follows in such cases.
- 1.3** If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to contact school immediately.
- 1.4** We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the Local Authority. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LA to intervene.
- 1.5** All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.
- 1.6** The vast majority of concerns and complaints are dealt with effectively by the staff and governors of the school. Please remember that they, like yourself only want to achieve the best they can for the children in their care.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1** 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 complaint through dialogue, mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3 The Complaints Process

- 3.1** 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. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. You can contact them to arrange an appointment to discuss your concern when you collect your child at the end of the school day or by telephoning the school, writing a letter or sending a note via your child. It is always best to make contact at an early stage so any problems can be dealt with swiftly, preventing the problem escalating.
- 3.2** Where a parent feels 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 head teacher or deputy head teacher. The head teacher /deputy head teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.
- 3.3** Should a parent feel their complaint has not been resolved, they should make an informal approach to the Chair of Governors of the school, who will investigate the matter. The Chair of Governors will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school and with the parent. You can obtain the contact details of the Chair from the school or by contacting Governor Support.

The above should also be used if a parent has a complaint about the headteacher of the school.

- 3.4** Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors via the school office. The parents will receive a receipt from the office and an acknowledgement from the chair of Governors within 5 working days that the letter has been received and that the matter is being dealt with.
- 3.5** The governing body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. It will arrange a meeting of the Governors Complaints Panel to discuss the complaint inviting the person making it to attend the meeting so that they can explain their complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.
- 3.6** After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent of this in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.
- 3.7** If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the LA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgment in an attempt to resolve the complaint. The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints about 'maladministration i.e. cases where the recognised complaints procedure has not been properly used. However, the ombudsman cannot investigate complaints about internal school matters and is not empowered to overturn the decision of a Governing Body Complaints Panel which has correctly followed procedures.
- 3.8** If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, or that the governing body have acted illegally in coming to their decision they are entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

4 Monitoring and review

- 4.1** The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The school logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved.
- 4.2** 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, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.