

Complaints Procedure



‘We can and we will’

GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

Mission Statement:

At Glebe School we believe in an ethos that values the whole child.

We strive to enable all children to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Introduction:

From 1 September 2003, 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 services that the school provides.

Scope of this procedure

This procedure covers all complaints received other than those set out below. Formal complaints in the following areas will be dealt with under the relevant procedures, some of which are statutory procedures:

- Admissions to schools
- Exclusion of pupils from school
- Statutory assessments of special education needs
- School re-organisation proposals subject to statutory procedures
- Complaints against individual members of staff in relation to their behaviour or competence, including the Headteacher
- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation
- Complaints about services provided by other providers, such as contractors and other Council service units
- Complaints about the curriculum, including religious education and collective worship

Principles when dealing with complaints

The complaints procedure is based on the following principles:

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- Confidentiality should be respected
- Give and expect both courtesy and consideration
- Communication is the key to solving disputes and disagreements
- Concerns and complaints will be dealt with fairly and as speedily as possible
- Complainants will be kept informed at every stage, whether it is an informal or formal complaint.
- Records will be kept of meetings and discussions that take place and will be retained in accordance with the data protection principles.

Anonymous complaints

It will be left to the Headteacher's discretion to decide whether the gravity of an anonymous complaint warrants its investigation.

Responsible person

Every school will have a person to receive, record and monitor formal complaints. The Headteacher is the complaints co-ordinator and in her absence, the deputy headteachers will assume this role.

Informal concerns/ complaints

The majority of parental concerns/complaints can be resolved informally and speedily. If there is a concern about what the school has done, or not done:

- The concern should be raised verbally with the teacher or Head teacher as soon as possible.
- It may be that the teacher/Head teacher is unaware of the problem or there might have been a misunderstanding.
- If there is dissatisfaction with the outcome and feel the matter cannot be resolved in an informal way, or if you feel so deeply about your concern that you wish to take the matter further, you have the opportunity to make a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints to the Head teacher/ Chair of Governors Stage one.

Formal complaints must be in writing, either in a letter, or email. It should be made clear that it is a formal complaint.

If you are unable to make a formal complaint in writing due to a disability or other difficulty, you must make your complaint in person and the complaint will be recorded on your behalf in writing.

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Formal complaints should normally be addressed to the Head teacher in the first instance. If formal complaints are passed directly to the Chair of Governors or another named governor, then these complaints will be passed on to the Head teacher who will consult with the Chair of Governors. A decision will be made on who will respond to the complainant. If the complaint is against the Head teacher, then the Chair of Governors will automatically deal with the complaint.

The Head teacher or Chair of Governors will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge in writing (or by email) **receipt** of the complaint within **3 school** days.

The Head teacher or Chair of Governors will investigate the complaint and respond to the complainant within **14 school days** of the date of receipt of the complaint.

At this stage, the outcome of the investigation by the Head teacher or chair of Governors is final.

Note: At any time during the course of the investigation, the complainant can withdraw the complaint or ask for it to become an informal complain/concern. This must be done in writing by the complainant and will be acknowledged in writing by the Head teacher or Chair of Governors.

Formal Complaints to the Governing Body stage two

If there is dissatisfaction with the outcome of the initial investigation (Stage One) and the complainant feels strongly that s/he wishes to take the matter further, s/he may wish to put the matter before the governing body complaints committee.

The Chair of Governors will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge in writing (or by email) **receipt** of the complaint **within 3 school** days. S/he will advise that a complaints' panel of 3 members of the Governing Body, who have not had any previous involvement in the complaint (if the Chair of Governors was involved in stage 1 of the process then they will not be permitted to sit on the complaints panel) will be convened at a date and time convenient to all parties but within **14 school days** of **receipt** of the complaint.

The meeting will be clerked.

The governors' complaints panel will take the following points into account, bearing in mind that each party will be given the opportunity to state their case and ask questions, and written material will be seen by all parties:

- The hearing will be as informal as possible.
- Witnesses are only required to attend for the part of the hearing in which they give their evidence.
- After introductions, the complainant is invited to explain their complaint and the outcomes sought, and be followed by their witnesses.

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- The Head teacher may question both the complainant and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The Head teacher is then invited to explain the school's actions and be followed by the school's witnesses.
- The complainant may question both the Head teacher and the witnesses after each has spoken.
- The panel may ask questions at any point.
- The complainant is then invited to sum up their complaint.
- The Headteacher is then invited to sum up the school's actions and response to the complaint.
- Both parties leave together while the panel decides on the issues.
- The Chair explains that both parties will be written to within 5 school days of the hearing, setting out the panel's decision(s).

The panel can:

- Dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- Uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- Recommend changes to the school's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

The decision of the panel, is final and the matter closed. The schools' complaints procedure at this stage will have been exhausted.

Note: The complainant may ask for his/her complaint to be withdrawn at any stage and this will be acknowledged in writing by the Chair of Governors or the Chair of the complaints panel, whichever is appropriate.

Complaints received outside of term time

Complaints delivered to the school outside of term time, will be deemed to have been received on the first day the school returns from its break.

Reviewed: January 2020

To be reviewed: January 2021