

ROXETH PRIMARY SCHOOL



The Education Act 2002 requires schools to have a complaints procedure based on a common standard. The website www.governor.net.co.uk includes a "School Complaints Procedure Toolkit", which covers:

- overview
- general principles of complaints
- the complaints procedure
- managing and recording complaints
- the act
- an example of a complaints procedure
- flowchart summarising how to deal with complaints
- example of a complaints form.

The following framework follows that guidance.

Complainants should always be referred to the school in the first instance. Most complaints can be dealt with informally. Where this proves unsuccessful a procedure published in the school prospectus should be in place which ensures that each complaint is responded to promptly and effectively. The guidance should be published in the community languages as well as English, where appropriate. Most complaints will be dealt with by the headteacher and staff, and only rarely will they come to the governing body.

Under various Acts, schools must have procedures for dealing with complaints about the curriculum, sex education, admissions, exclusions, SEN and child protection.

Status

Statutory

Purpose

The school's values are concerned with meeting the needs of pupils, parents and others who have a stake in the school. This includes the staff, members of the local community and the Local Authority. The governing body believes that constant feedback is an important ingredient in self-improvement and raising

standards. People, whether they be pupils or adults, who have concerns or complaints should feel that they can be voiced and will be considered seriously. All complainants have the right to be accompanied when making the complaint, and pupils may be accompanied by a parent or another adult.

There are various principles behind this policy:

- There is a difference between a concern and a complaint. A concern is likely to require discussion between teacher, pupil and parent. If the concern is not resolved by that means then it could become a complaint. "A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction which needs a response from the school." (*North Tyneside LEA*)
- A complaint is likely to arise when there are issues of physical or emotional well-being and security or when the school's stated values or aims are being ignored.
- A breach of the law will always constitute a complaint.
- We will seek to resolve complaints by informal means wherever possible.
- Investigations will be full, fair and swift.
- People will be kept informed of progress and the decisions reached.
- Every effort will be made to respect confidentiality.
- Feedback will be actively sought from pupils and parents in order to minimise complaints and maximise accountability.

Relationship to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Roles and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff, governors

The **Headteacher** will ensure that:

- this complaints policy and the procedures are made known to all stakeholders through newsletters and the prospectus
- all complaints are dealt with in the first instance by the Headteacher or a member of the leadership team, who will document the complaint (names, dates, times, events), acknowledge in writing within three days of receipt, and consult with all those directly concerned
- the complainant receives a written explanation of the action taken within ten working days following the complaint.

All **staff** are expected to encourage pupils and parents who have concerns to follow the complaints procedure.

The **governing body** will ensure the following.

- If a complainant is not satisfied with the action taken by the Headteacher, then the chair of governors will hear the complaint. On receipt of the complaint the chair of governors will inform the Headteacher, investigate the complaint, and write to the complainant within ten working days, explaining the action taken.
- Where the complaint is against the Headteacher, the complainant may wish to contact the chair of governors first.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the chair of governors then a formal complaint may be made to the governing body through the clerk to the governors. Within 15 working days of receiving the written complaint a Complaints Committee will meet to consider it. The complainant will be given seven working days' notice of the meeting, and may take a friend or other person to provide support at the meeting. Within seven days of that meeting the complainant will be informed of the decision, the reasons for it, and any action to be taken by the school. The decision of the complaints committee is final.
- Where a complainant considers that the school is not complying with the legal requirements of council policy in respect of a pupil's education then the Local Authority can provide the complainant, the governors or the head with further advice.
- Where a complaint is about the governing body this can be referred to the Local Authority. If that fails to produce a satisfactory response it can then be referred to the Secretary of State. If the complaint is upheld and the governing body fails to follow the directions of the Secretary of State, the judgement may be legally enforced.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

All complaints and the action taken will be documented and a summary included in the Headteacher's termly report to the governors, with advice on any implications for policies.