

POLICY:

COMPLAINTS

DATE: June 2004

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: The Headteacher

MONITORING: Governing Body

REVIEWED: June 2016

REVIEW DATE: June 2017

RATIONALE

We believe that all people have a right to raise issues of concern and make complaints when they feel it is necessary and this should be within a clearly defined structure.

PURPOSE

The main purpose of this complaints procedure is to solve problems and to give people a means to raise issues of concern and have them addressed. The policy relates primarily to formal complaints, not everyday concerns.

PRINCIPLES

We are a school that wants to listen to concerns and encourage parents/carers to express these concerns informally before a formal complaint is made.

Complainants should be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation.

All complainants have a right to expect a response to the concern or complaint they have made following investigation.

All school staff should be aware of the complaints procedure and understand:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints.
- The importance of treating all complaints respectfully

The complaints procedure will be publicised in the school prospectus, with copies available from reception, and on the school website.

CONCLUSION

We are a welcoming school and we are constantly seeking to improve on our current practices and care for our students. The expression of concerns/complaints is welcome and will be dealt with sensitively.

<u>WORKING PRACTICE:</u>	COMPLAINTS	<u>DATE:</u> June 2004
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EXPRESSING CONCERNS / INFORMAL STAGE

Parents/Carers should raise their concerns with the person they feel is most appropriate. This is likely to be through contact with the relevant Head of Year, Curriculum Leader or a member of the Leadership Group. The relevant person will consider the best way of dealing with the concerns raised according to the circumstances. It is preferable for all concerned that issues raised are resolved quickly at an informal stage rather than later. Paget School will try to differentiate between a concern being raised and a formal complaint. In many cases concerns will be resolved at the informal stage, including an apology if necessary. It is advisable for staff to record agreed actions.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Stage 1 – The Headteacher

It may be that the Headteacher has not been aware of the concern raised prior to this point. At this stage the Headteacher should consider whether the complainant could be satisfied without recourse to the Governing Body.

The response to the complainant should be as described in the paragraph “Outcomes” (see below)

Action through a complaints procedure may lead to action being initiated under other procedures. This may be disciplinary or child protection procedures and consideration should be given to this possibility at the earliest stage. In these cases the investigations under the complaints procedure will be suspended until the action under the other procedures (including appeals) has been concluded. The complainant should be advised if this is the case and also informed of the likely delay in the final resolution of their complaint. The school should make it clear to the complainant that they will not necessarily be able to provide them with the details of the outcome of procedures, depending on the circumstances,

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Governing Body

Where complaints cannot be resolved informally and when the complainant has already contacted the Headteacher then complaints may be made directly to the Chair of the Governing Body, preferably in writing, but verbal contact is acceptable. Where a complaint is accepted verbally it should be reported back to the complainant to ensure that the details have been collected correctly.

The Chair should record when the complaint is received. A complaint should be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the chair. The acknowledgement should include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear about the process of the investigation.

Details of the complaint should be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution.

The Role of the Chair of Governors

The chair will consider whether the investigation can be completed by the Headteacher (who will already have been involved), the chair him/herself, or whether to refer the complaint to a complaints committee of the Governing Body. If the latter course of action is followed the chair will present a full report to the committee and, if necessary, external advice may be sought from the County Improvement Manager.

The committee will be made up of 3 governors. The membership will not include the Headteacher and, according to the matter complained about, it may not be appropriate for certain categories of governor to be included.

The committee should meet at a time convenient to the members of the committee, (and within 20 days of the complaint) the chair (who will present the report), the complainant (in order that they may make representations in person) and any witnesses.

The Role of the Clerk to the Governing Body Complaints Committee

The committee will be clerked by the Minuting Clerk to the Governing Body who will

- Set the date, time and venue
- Collate any written material and send to all parties in advance
- Record the proceedings
- Notify all parties of the decision within 5 working days

Outcomes

In all cases where a complaint has been investigated the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- The complaint
- The scope of the investigation
- The conclusion of the investigation
- Any action which has resulted
- Review policy

The committee may wish to offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss the response.

If the investigation upholds the complaint redress should be appropriate to the complaint and may include:

- An apology
- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently.
- Changing procedures to avoid future problems.

Paget School will take responsibility for deciding who will take remedial action and ensuring that the remedy is carried out providing that the remedy is within the school's powers. The school will further ensure that the approach to remedies is reasonable and consistent. Where a complaint is not upheld the complainant must be given a written response and be informed of any further action that may be appropriate in their situation.

