



# Harold Court Primary School

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Moving forward together, striving for excellence!

**HEAD TEACHER: Mrs. L Hogan-O'Neill**

POLICY ADOPTED: June 2019

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: June 2020

# Harold Court Primary School

## Complaints Policy

### Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all children, and that the Head Teacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

The difference between a concern and a complaint

A 'concern' may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'. A complaint may be generally defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures. Schools should take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

There are occasions when complainants would like to raise their concerns formally. In those cases, the school's formal procedure should be invoked through the stages outlined within their procedure.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person, including members of the general public, may make a complaint about any provision of facilities or services that a school provides, unless separate statutory procedures apply (such as exclusions or admissions). Schools must not limit complaints to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school.

This policy has been written following the DFE Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/489056/Best\\_Practice\\_Advice\\_for\\_School\\_Complaints\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489056/Best_Practice_Advice_for_School_Complaints_2016.pdf)

N.B Conflict between estranged parents over the application of parental responsibility is a common cause of complaints made to schools. 'Understanding and Dealing with Issues Relating to Parental Responsibility' contains specific advice about how to properly approach issues concerning parental responsibility.

Aims and objectives

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 and 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. Although there is no timescale for each stage (except Stage four – Chair of governors) we do expect the complaint to be dealt with as quickly as possible.

### **3. School Complaints Procedure**

#### **Stage One:**

If a parent is concerned 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 very hard 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 that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress. They will where possible keep you up to date with how a situation is, if there should be a need too.

#### **Stage Two:**

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 a member of the schools management team. There they will investigate and take action. The matter will be dealt with and where needed follow up will be given if appropriate. If not the school should be trusted to be dealing with it. It is most common for complaints to be normally resolved at this stage.

#### **Stage Three:**

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with a member of the management team, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly.

#### **Stage Four:**

Should a parent remain dissatisfied with a complaint, or the way it was handled at Stage Three, the complainant needs to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. 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. (Please refer to appendix 1). The Chair of Governors will aim to respond to you within 5 working days of receiving the letter and explain the next course of action within the response.

#### **Stage Five:**

At this stage if the complainant remains dissatisfied, despite the Chair seeking to resolve the issue, the complainant should state this in writing to the Chair of Governors. The Chair will then convene a Governing Body complaints panel.

#### Monitoring and review:

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The office team in conjunction with the Deputy Head Teacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

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 parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process

## **Appendix One**

### **The Complaints Procedure**

#### **The Stages of Complaints**

The five school-based stages are:

- Stage one: complaint heard by class teacher;
- Stage two: complaint heard by a member of the schools management team;
- Stage Three: complaint heard by the Deputy Head Teacher
- Stage Four: complaint heard by the Head Teacher
- Stage Five: complaint heard by Chair of Governors (using complaints form);
- Stage Six: FINAL complaint heard by Governing Body's complaints appeal panel.

Harold Court Primary School - Complaint Form (Stage 3)

Please complete and return to Chair of Governors who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.



Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: