



**Morden Mount Primary School**

Complaints Policy

Author: Mary Jackson

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Approved by Governing Body: Jack Smith

Signature of Chair of Governors: 

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## **School Complaints Policy Document**

- The school aims to be a caring, positive and supportive place where young people can learn and receive education in an appropriate manner.
- We want to listen to parents' views about their children's education and well-being at school.
- We will try to resolve parents' concerns and complaints as informally and quickly as possible.
- We will take any complaints seriously and provide a thorough and appropriate response.
- No pupil will be penalised or intimidated as a result of her/his parent making a complaint.
- We aim to learn from any mistakes or weaknesses, in order to improve further the standards of education offered at the school.
- There is a set of clear and detailed procedures for handling complaints that is available to parents who wish to pursue a complaint beyond the initial informal stage.
- There is a parents' leaflet which is provided to all parents, outlining how they should pursue any concern or complaint that they may have.
- The school will ensure that all complaints are logged.
- The governing body as a whole will not discuss individual complaints, and any governor receiving such a complaint will direct the parent to the school's complaints leaflet and procedures.
- The governing body will monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy and procedures annually by receiving a summary report of numbers and types of formal complaints together with outcomes. Individual details will not be included.
- Complaints or appeals relating to admissions, exclusions or Special Educational Needs provision will normally be handled by separate statutory mechanisms, and we will ensure that parents are informed of how such complaints can be pursued.

Procedures for dealing with a complaint about bullying from either a child or a parent on behalf of their child

Reassure the parent and / or child that you are taking the complaint seriously and that you will deal with it that day.

**Do not tell the child to ignore it.**

Teachers must meet with all of the children concerned

The victim should be allowed to tell those doing the bullying what actions are upsetting him/her.

It must be made clear to the perpetrators that their actions are bullying.

Usually the children will acknowledge that they are bullying and will be sorry. They usually apologise without being prompted and will often suggest ways to improve matters.

It is essential that everyone has a chance to put their point of view across and have their say. Sometimes the assumed victim may be engaging in aggressive behaviour which is causing an aggressive response from other children.

**THESE ACTIONS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH. THE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT MUST BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER IF BULLYING IS TO BE EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATED.**

Once an improvement in the situation has been agreed the class teacher must meet with all children 3 times in the next 5 days to monitor that there is no further bullying.

In the second week 2 meetings must take place with all pupils.

In the following 2 weeks there must be one meeting each week.

The meetings will be short and if going well need not take longer than 2 minutes to check that everything is going well.

A note must be kept of all meetings, who is present, the outcome and the date.

If the required improvement has taken place the meetings may be discontinued after one month but children should be told to come and see you again if the bullying reoccurs.

The bullying should be referred to the head teacher if there is no improvement after two weeks or the bullying reoccurs once the meetings have stopped. Records of previous meetings will need to be seen by the head teacher. The head teacher will also require a full discussion of steps taken so far to prevent the bullying.

**Dealing with parents**

Inform parents of the action the school will take. Instruct them to come back to see you if the bullying reoccurs at any time in the near or distant future. With children in FS, ks1 or those with communication difficulties staff should meet with them and the child so that they and the child understand the actions taken and what they should do if the problem persists.

**Teaching Assistants and Midday Supervisors**

Midday Supervisors please deal with any immediate bullying and report the incident to the Lead Teaching Assistant. The Lead TA will need to know the name of all the children involved.

Teaching Assistants should report the complaint to the class teacher.

**Referring bullying**

The head teacher will follow the same procedures. If after one week there is no improvement the parents of all pupils concerned will be contacted and invited to a meeting individually to discuss the situation. The class teacher will be expected to attend this meeting.

The above actions are for dealing with the most common forms of bullying by pupils - name calling, pushing, hitting, not speaking and leaving out of games or groups of friends. Where the actions of a bully

are very serious and causing serious harm to another pupil the class teacher may refer the bullying immediately and after discussion with the head teacher contact parents immediately. This would include any sexualised behaviour, deliberate serious physical harm, forcing someone to steal or harm others. This not an exhaustive list and staff must as always use their own judgement. Staff in any doubt about an incident should always speak with one of the senior leaders in school i.e. the assistant head, deputy head or head teacher.

**The head teacher expects all staff to adhere to this procedure for managing bullying effectively.**

**Mary Jackson June 2012**

# Complaints Leaflet for Parents

## *Introduction*

We aim to provide your child with the best possible education and meet his or her needs as well as we can. However, in any school, parents may occasionally feel concerned about something or have a complaint. If this is the case we want to hear from you. This leaflet explains how you can voice a concern or complaint, and how we will respond.

## *What is a complaint?*

It can be a concern or problem or feeling of dissatisfaction that you have about an aspect of our work.

## *What do I do if I have a complaint about the school?*

Tell a member of staff. Preferably speak with the member of staff most knowledgeable of the facts of the matter. He or she will talk it over with you and try to sort things out. She/he will discuss your complaint with you and seek to resolve the matter. In a primary school it may be possible to talk to your child's class teacher after school when you pick your child up, but in secondary schools you may need to make an appointment to see the appropriate teacher, and possibly your child's form tutor, together. Your child will not be penalised or treated less favourably as a result of your making a complaint.

There are certain specific complaints that are handled differently.

- If your child is refused admission to the school you have a statutory right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. The school will be able to give you details.
- If your child has been excluded for between 5 and 15 school days, you have a right to make representation to the governing body. If your child has been permanently excluded you have the right to an independent appeal.
- If your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) and you have a complaint about her/his SEN provision, the school will be able to give you details of the Local Authority's dispute resolution arrangements, the Parent Partnership service, and the SEN Tribunal for disputes about a Statement of Special Educational Need.

## *What do I do if I feel my complaint hasn't been sorted out?*

You may contact the school office and ask for an appointment to see the Head teacher or other senior teacher who handles complaints. The Head teacher will listen carefully and ask you any questions to help him/her understand the situation fully. She/he will probably then have to talk to other people, but will get in touch with you as soon as s/he is able to respond fully. This is referred to as the *informal stage* of the complaints procedure

### ***If I feel unhappy with what the Head teacher says, what can I do then?***

You may then write to the Chair of the school's governors (or designated governor), at the school address, setting out your complaint and why you are unhappy with the school's response. Please write within 14 days of receiving the Head Teacher's response. The Chair (or designated governor) will write acknowledging your letter within a few days and may invite you for an informal meeting to discuss your complaint. If not, the Chair (or designated governor) will then write again once s/he has investigated more fully. You should receive a full response within 14 days. This is still referred to as the ***informal stage*** of the complaints procedure.

### ***What happens if I am unhappy about the Chair of Governors' response?***

You are entitled to ask a panel of governors to meet to consider your complaint. If you want to do this, write to the Chair or Clerk to the governing body within 14 days of receiving the Chair's response. Say that you have a formal complaint and that you remain unhappy with the way the school and Chair of governors have responded, and that you would like a panel of governors to consider your complaint. There is no need to write all the details of the complaint in this letter but you will be required to explain clearly what you are complaining about. The Clerk will contact you about the panel and explain what will happen. You may bring someone with you if you wish. This part of the procedure is referred to as the ***formal stage*** of the complaints procedure

### ***What happens at the Panel meeting?***

One of the governors will chair the meeting, and s/he will explain what will happen. You may be asked to outline your complaint. Panel members and/or the Head teacher, who will also be present, may ask you questions. The Head teacher will then explain how the school has responded to the complaint, and then you and the panel may ask the Head teacher questions. You may also ask other people (witnesses) to speak about what happened.

After this, everyone except the panel and the person taking minutes will leave, so that the panel can consider its findings. The Chair of the panel will write to you within a few days setting out the panel's findings. They will also write to the Head teacher and Chair of governors. Their findings are binding upon the school.

The panel's findings are the school's final response to you about your complaint. Schools are responsible for their own activities, and the Local Authority cannot get involved. The Local Authority cannot tell a school or governing body what to do. If you are still unhappy you could write to the Secretary of State for Education, but again there is no power to intervene unless the governing body has acted unreasonably or has failed to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

## **WHAT MIGHT A COMPLAINT BE ABOUT?**

- your child's academic/social progress
- bullying by other pupils
- your child's relationship with teachers or other staff
- homework, too much or too little of it
- unfair treatment of your child as you or your child perceive it
- issues on the Health and Safety of your child
- absence (authorised/unauthorised)
- missing property
- detentions and other sanctions
- Parents' Evenings
- any situation which causes you or your child concern

## **How to Complain – A Summary**

1. Talk to the staff member concerned or other appropriate staff member
2. Talk to the Head teacher
3. Write to the Chair of Governors
4. Write to ask for a complaints panel

## ***FINALLY...***

Please be assured that we will take your complaint seriously and treat you fairly. If something has gone wrong we want to put it right, and if you are not happy with the result, then neither are we!