



Webster Primary School Complaints Procedure

We aim to ensure that Webster is a happy, safe and caring school where pupils receive the best possible education. Staff members and Governors are committed to working with parents and carers to this end. However, we recognise that there may be times when parents, carers and other stakeholders have concerns or complaints which they wish to bring to our notice.

The aim of the Complaints Procedure is to deal with complaints speedily and efficiently. This procedure applies to complaints against the school and its operations, including the actions of personnel and the content and delivery of the curriculum.

The Governing Body takes complaints against the school very seriously. An outline of any formal complaints which are upheld will be reported to the Governing Body by the Principal (upheld at Stage 1) or to the Chair of Governors (upheld at Stages 2 and 3).

1. General Principles

All complaints will be dealt with in a transparent way as quickly as is reasonably practicable.

If the procedure is invoked, complainants will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint. At each stage we will consider ways in which the matter can be resolved.

- An apology.
- An explanation.
- An admission that the matter could have been handled differently or better.
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur and an explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again.
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint.

It should be noted that an acceptance that the school could have handled the matter better is not an admission of negligence.

At each stage the person investigating the complaint will:-

- Establish what has happened so far and who was involved.
- Clarify the nature of the complaint.
- Meet with or contact the complainant.
- Clarify with the complainant what might put things right.
- Interview with an open mind, those involved or those complained of (allowing them to be accompanied).
- Respect people's desire for confidentiality.
- Ensure that all paper work, including records of dates and times and a summary of telephone conversations, are retained.

2. Stages of the procedure

It is expected that most concerns and minor complaints can be resolved quickly and informally.

- If you do have a complaint or concern, speak to your child's teacher or support worker in the first instance.
- If the matter cannot be resolved in this way then it will be necessary to proceed to the formal stage.
- If the complaint is about the Principal you should proceed to Stage 2 and write to the Chair of Governors.

Stage 1

- You, the complainant must write to the Principal, describing your complaint.
- The Principal will offer to meet with you to discuss the complaint as soon as is practicable or within ten working days of the receipt of the letter.
- The Principal will investigate the matter and respond in writing as soon as possible but within ten working days.
- If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties it will be necessary to proceed to the next stage.

Stage 2

- You, the complainant should now write to the Chair of Governors stating the nature of the complaint.
- The Chair will meet with you to find out more about the concern/complaint and then will investigate the matter on behalf of the Governing Body.
- Following the investigation, the Chair will present the results of her/his investigation to you, the complainant.

Stage 3

- If the matter is still not resolved the Governing Body will invite you, the complainant to explain the complaint in more detail, through a Complaints Panel. At least one member of the Complaints Panel will be independent of the Governing Body.
- After listening to all parties and considering the evidence, the Panel will attempt to resolve the complaint.
- The Committee will write to you, the complainant, with their conclusion.
- If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 3 you, should then move to Stage 4 by contacting the EFA. (Education Funding Agency).

Stage 4

It is important to note that the EFA can only consider complaints about Academies where the complaint falls into one of the following areas.

- There is undue delay or the academy did not comply with its own complaints procedure when considering a complaint
- The academy is in breach of its funding agreement with the secretary of state
- The academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation

The EFA will not overturn the academy's decision, but if it finds that the academy has not dealt with the complaint properly it will request that the academy looks at the complaint again, and that the academy updates its complaints procedures to meet requirements.

It says:

If the academy's complaints procedure does not meet the regulations, we will ask the academy to put this right. We may seek to enforce the decision under the terms of the funding agreement on behalf of the secretary of state, if appropriate.

The EFA will consider evidence that an academy has failed to comply with any other legal obligation placed on it. However, there may be another organisation that is better placed to consider the matter, in which case the EFA will refer the complainant or the complaint to them.

Complaints about Academies should be sent by post to;

Ministerial and Public Communications Division

Department for Education

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

or by using the Complaints Form available from the DFE website.