

Queens Park Academy

Complaints Procedure



Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children. 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.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher in the first instance. The following policy outlines what happens if this initial conversation does not resolve the situation successfully.

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 considerations. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be discussed fully, and then resolved.

The complaints process

The School's complaints process consists of four stages:

- Stage 1 – Concerns and difficulties, dealt with informally;
- Stage 2 – Complaints formally investigated by the Headteacher (or designate);
- Stage 3 – Complaints formally reviewed by the Chair of Governors (or designate);
- Stage 4 – Complaint Panel Hearing.

Stage 1 – The concerns are dealt with informally.

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher and/or the Assistant Head responsible for the Key Stage. 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 affects the child's well-being or progress.

Stage 2 – Complaints are formally investigated by the Headteacher (or designate).

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher and/or Assistant Head, 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. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Should a parent have a complaint about the Head Teacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

Stage 3 – Complaints formally reviewed by the Chair of Governors (or designate);

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. 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.

The Chair of Governors must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. A meeting to discuss the complaint will be organised and the complainant will be invited to attend. The will allow the complaint to be heard in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all the evidence, the Chair of Governors will consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The Chair will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

Stage 4 – Complaint Panel Hearing

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make an appeal to a panel of governors. Complaints only rarely reach the appeal stage. At this stage, the Chair of Governors may wish to seek advice from outside agencies, for example the Local Authority or the Department for Education.

The aim of the appeal to a panel of governors is to resolve the complaint and achieve reconciliation between the school and the complainant. However, it may only be possible to establish the facts of a situation and make recommendations about future action. It should also satisfy the complainant that their complaint has been taken seriously. It is important, should a complaint reach the appeal stage, that the governing body is impartial and independent.

Individual complaints should not be considered by the whole Governing Board. The Governing Board will therefore establish a panel to deal with complaints by nominating a panel of governors. Please note: this should include persons not involved in the management of the school. Panel members should have had no prior involvement with the complaint. Generally, the Chair of Governors is not on the panel as s/he may be involved at the earlier stage. Governing bodies should have regard to the advantages of having a mix of

types of governor on the panel and be sensitive to issues of equal opportunity in the composition of the panel.

Individual governors should not get involved in looking into complaints before this stage to avoid prejudicing their potential involvement. If individual governors are approached by parents or others with complaints, they should refer the complainant to the school complaints procedure, making the necessary introduction to a member of staff or the Head Teacher if appropriate. Complaints that reach the appeal stage will do so because the complainant is not satisfied with the response so far.

Monitoring and review

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher logs all formal 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 all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.