

LANGTREE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Complaints Procedure

Staff and parents need to be clear about the difference between a 'concern' and a 'complaint'. It is in the best interest of all parties that any concern is expressed and resolved quickly and at the earliest possible stage as doing so will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints. It is also in the interests of the children if this is done as amicably as possible. We will always treat parents and carers with respect and insist that staff here are treated in a similar way. We will, however, act to ensure our school remains a safe place for pupils, staff and other members of our community.

Investigating Concerns

The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the school can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. Therefore, when approached by a parent/carers, staff are required to:

- Be impartial;
- Be non-adversarial;
- Respect people's desire for confidentiality;
- Establish what has happened and who has been involved;
- Clarify the nature of the concern and what remains unresolved; and
- Keep a record of the conversation and inform the Head Teacher.

Parents are advised to adopt the following procedure:

- 1 All concerns should first be discussed with the class teacher;
- 2 Should the concern not be resolved it should then be discussed with the Joint Head Teachers who will take up the matter.
- 3 Complaints about the Joint Headteachers or any member of the Governing Body should be communicated directly to the Chair of Governors, via the School Office. In the event of the complaint being against the Chair of Governors, this should be addressed to the Vice Chair. At this stage, it is not too late to suggest mediation and seek to resolve the problem informally.
- 4 Should the problem remain unresolved after all informal avenues have been exhausted, the matter will be formally referred to the Governing Body of the school. The complainant needs to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair, or a nominated governor, will convene a GB Complaints Panel. Individual complaints would not be heard by the whole GB at any stage, as this could compromise the impartiality of any panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint.

Governors have adopted the Devon County Council Model Procedure to deal with the comments and complaints about schools. A copy is available to read from the school office. Parent Governors are happy to listen to concerns and support parents if required by offering guidance in how to make a complaint.

A Flow Chart is annexed containing details of the stages of the complaints process.

Concerns Raised With Individual Governors

Where the first approach is made to a governor, the next step would be to refer the complainant to the appropriate person and advise them about the procedure. It is essential that governors do not act unilaterally on an individual complaint outside the formal procedure or be involved at the early stages in case they are needed to sit on a panel at a later stage of the procedure.