

**Denby Dale**  
First & Nursery School



**COMPLIMENTS,  
CONCERNS AND  
COMPLAINTS  
POLICY**

# Denby Dale First and Nursery School

## Compliments, Concerns and Complaints

### Aims and objectives

Our school aims to work closely in partnership with parents and carers. We value all feedback and use it to inform and reflect on our practice.

We aim 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. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### Introduction

We strive to provide good education and care for all our children. The Head teacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. The school has procedures in place to encourage and address compliments, suggestions, concerns or complaints by parents or carers. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

### Compliments and Suggestions

These are always welcome and very encouraging to teachers and staff. The school encourages feedback or opinions from pupils and parents. In practice this dialogue is continuous, sometimes directly to the member of staff and also through more formal methods. These include replies to 'mentions letters', e-mails to [parents@denbydale.education](mailto:parents@denbydale.education), letters or items posted in the suggestion box by the front office. It may not always be possible to act immediately but pupils and the school always benefit so please don't hold back.

### Concerns

It is natural that parents may, occasionally, be concerned about an aspect of their child's education or welfare at school. This could include issues concerning the school's approach to aspects of the curriculum, homework, behavioural problems or any other issue. The school welcomes enquiries from parents about any matter. Teachers and staff will explain the school practices, policies, and how they affect the pupils. The vast majority of concerns will be handled by the class teacher or the child's key worker. If in doubt, keep asking until you are completely satisfied as all staff are eager to help. The usual format is to speak to the child's class teacher or key worker in the first instance, or to contact the school office to arrange an appointment to discuss your concern with whoever you wish. At all times the staff will do their best to help to resolve a problem. If occasionally parents feel they must state their concern formally, this too is not a problem. The school has defined procedures for handling complaints so don't be embarrassed if you feel an issue warrants more attention.

### Complaints

We believe there is a free flow of information between home and school but recognise there may be times when misunderstandings arise, you are concerned about aspects of your child's progress or you may be unhappy about a particular event or activity which you have heard has taken place. In any event it is important you do not keep a problem or concern to yourself but approach the school.

It is also important that this procedure is followed step by step as any attempts to „jump“ steps will be referred back and the procedure followed as stated.

**Step 1 – Informal discussions with Class Teacher or Key Worker.**

Before making a complaint, we would suggest that you are clear about your concern and also that you discuss this with an appropriate member of staff. The first point of contact for a specific concern should always be the appropriate member of staff. If you are not sure who is most appropriate, explain your concern to your child’s class teacher or Key Worker who will be able to suggest to whom it is best to speak. It is preferable if you can agree a time and place to discuss your concerns in peace and quiet rather than at a time when the member of staff concerned is possibly surrounded by other children and/or parents. This could be a telephone conversation at an agreed time. We would expect most problems to be sorted out in this informal way by a frank and open discussion, free from distraction. Please remember that all members of staff wish to help reassure you by listening to you and helping you meet with the most appropriate person. This stage of the procedure should normally be completed within two weeks.

**Step 2 – Informal discussions with the Head Teacher or a Senior Member of staff.**

Sometimes you may still feel dissatisfied with the outcome of your discussions and want to take the matter further. If you are in this situation you may make an appointment to contact the Head teacher. This should normally be completed within four weeks.

**Step 3 – Formal investigation by the Head teacher**

If, following your informal discussions you wish an investigation to be undertaken by the school, you should put your concerns in writing to the Head teacher. You should state the full details and reasons for your complaint. The Head teacher will undertake a full investigation which may require a further interview with you or a request for additional written information. A written reply will be sent to you following the investigation. This will normally take place within a four-week period.

**Step 4 – Formal investigation by the Governors**

If the problem cannot be resolved by you and the Head teacher, you may make a formal complaint to the Governing Body. The complaint which you should send to the Chair of Governors (the school secretary will advise you of the address for contact) should set out precisely why you are dissatisfied. The Chair of Governors will nominate a small group of Governors to investigate your complaint. You may be invited to attend an interview by the investigating Governors in addition to any written submission you make. Following the investigation by the Governors, you will be sent a formal response informing you of their decision. This investigation will be completed within a maximum six-week period.

**Step 5 – Investigation by the LA**

Following your formal complaint to the Governing Body, you have a further right of appeal, to the LA, if you consider the Governing Body has not acted properly in carrying out its investigation into your complaint. The LA cannot investigate if you are simply unhappy with the conclusion the Governors have reached. Complaints should be sent to the LA’s Complaints officer (the Clerk to the Governors can advise you of the address to contact). You should receive a reply to your complaint within four weeks of it being acknowledged.

### **Step 6 – Appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment**

After appealing to the LEA, you have the final right of appeal to the Secretary of State that the LA has acted unreasonably. If your complaint to the LA is not upheld, the officer investigating it will inform you of your rights and the address for contact.

**You can also complain to OFSTED about any concerns.**

**See attached details.**

You should get a response within 30 working days. The response will tell you if Ofsted will investigate or not, and why.

### **Complaints involving the Head teacher**

If your complaint involves the Head teacher, you should firstly have direct discussions with the Head Teacher. Where it is not possible to resolve the complaint through discussions, you should set out your complaint in writing and send it to the Chair of Governors with a copy to the Head teacher. If your complaint could involve disciplinary action against a member of staff, the Governors should follow procedures set out by the LA. If this situation arises, the Chair of Governors will inform you of the procedures to be followed.