

Hatherley Infant School



Complaints Procedure

'Learn and Grow Together'

Agreed: November 2016
Review: November 2019

We want to ensure your needs are met. If you would like this document in any other format, please contact us:

admin@hatherley-inf.gloucs.sch.uk

Statement of Intent

We believe that this school provides an excellent education and that the Headteacher and school personnel work very hard to build positive relationships and have in place clear lines of communication with all parents and others. In so doing complaints are kept to a minimum.

However, we are aware that under section 29 of the Education Act 2002 we must have in place clear procedures to deal with any complaint made against the school or individuals connected with it. We take any complaint seriously and we deal with them professionally following set procedures.

Aims

- To deal with any complaint against the school or any individual connected with it by following the correct procedures.
- To deal with all complaints thoroughly and by being open, honest and fair when dealing with the complainant.
- To differentiate between a concern and a complaint.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.

General Principles

- We believe complaints need to be resolved as quickly as possible but in some cases we need to establish whether the issue brought to our attention is a complaint or an actual concern. In such cases 'many issues can be resolved informally without the need to invoke formal procedures'.
- We agree with the definition that a concern is 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.' While a complaint is best defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action'. By making this distinction between a concern and a complaint and taking all informal concerns seriously the number of concerns should reduce before developing into formal complaints.
- We must be aware that besides parents/carers of children who are registered at this school any member of the general public can make a complaint about 'any provision of facilities or services' that we provide at this school.
- An anonymous concern or complaint will not be investigated under this procedure, unless there are exceptional circumstances
- We understand that a complaint may be made in writing, by telephone or in person. However, we will endeavour to accommodate those complainants who may be disabled or have learning difficulties by having in place alternative methods of registering a complaint.
- To allow for a proper investigation, concerns or complaints should be brought to the attention of the school as soon as possible.
- In general, the school will not consider any complaint that was raised more than 3 months after the event

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility to deal with any complaint made against the Headteacher;

- responsibility not to share complaints with the whole governing body in case an appeals panel has to convene;
- responsibility to arrange for an independent panel to hear a complaint if the whole governing body have been 'contaminated' by having full knowledge of the complaint;
- responsibility of annually discussing the concerns/complaints log with the Headteacher;
- in place a self-evaluation process to monitor the way complaints are dealt with and to consider what improvements can be made to the complaints procedures;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- deal with all complaints impartially and in a non-adversarial manner;
- keep the complainant fully updated at all stages of the complaints procedure;
- keep records;
- not share third party information;
- seek an interpreter if the need arises;
- refer any complaint made against him/her to the Chair of Governors;
- ensure full and fair investigations are undertaken by an independent person where necessary;
- ensure confidentiality at all times;
- ensure all complaints are resolved as quickly as possible within realistic time limits;
- log all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved;
- discuss the complaints log every year with the Governing Body;
- monitor and review complaints to see how they can contribute to school improvement.

Role of the Complainant

We ask the complainant to:

- cooperate with school to find a solution to the complaint as quickly as possible;
- provide enough information as possible;
- be respectful to everyone involved in the complaint procedure.

Complaint Procedures

Stage 1 (Informal Stage)

It is normally appropriate to communicate directly with the member of staff concerned. This may be by letter, by telephone or in person by appointment. Many concerns can be resolved by simple clarification or the provision of information and it is anticipated that most complaints will be resolved by this informal stage.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to address them directly to the Head Teacher (or to the Chair of the Governing Body, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher).

If you are uncertain about whom to contact, please seek advice from the school office or the Clerk to the Governing Body.

If, after the discussion the matter is not resolved or if the complainant is not happy with the way that it has been handled then the process moves to the next stage.

However, every effort should be made to resolve the matter at this stage.

Stage 2 (Formal Stage)

If your concern is not resolved at the informal stage you must put the complaint in writing and pass it to the Head Teacher, (or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, for the attention of the Chair, if the complaint is about the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for ensuring that it is investigated appropriately. A Complaint Form is provided to help you.

You should include details that might help the investigation, such as names of potential witnesses, dates and times of events, and copies of relevant documents.

It is very important that you include a clear statement about what you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage.

Please pass the completed form, in a sealed envelope to the Head teacher or to the Clerk to the Governing Body, as appropriate.

Once a formal written complaint is received from the complainant then the Headteacher will undertake an investigation and reply in writing to the complainant within 15 days.

The Head Teacher (or Chair) may invite you to a meeting to discuss your complaint and to seek a resolution. If you accept that invitation, a friend may accompany you if you wish to help you in explaining the nature of your complaint.

If a formal written complaint is received about the Headteacher from the complainant then the complaint must be sent to the clerk to the governors complaints appeal panel with a written reply being sent to the complainant within 15 days.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which the process has been followed, you can request that the governing body reviews the process followed by the school in handling the complaint. You must make this request in writing to the clerk to the governing body, within 10 school days of receiving notice of the outcome, and include a statement specifying any perceived failures to follow the procedure. The procedure described below will be followed. A Review Request form is provided for your convenience.

Stage 3 (Formal Stage - Review)

- The complainant writes formally to the clerk to the governors complaints appeal panel outlining the reasons why he/she is not happy with the outcomes of the Headteacher's investigation.
- The complainant requests that an appeals panel reviews the complaint. A panel of three members of the governing body will conduct any review of the process followed by the school. The appeals panel meets within 12 to 20 days after receipt of the complainants letter.
- The panel will first receive written evidence from the complainant of perceived failures to follow the procedure. The panel will then invite representatives of the school (Usually the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Governing Body panel that has considered the matter), as appropriate, to make a response to the complaint. The panel may also have access to the records kept of the process followed.
- You, and the school representatives, will be informed in writing of the outcome, usually within 5 school days of the panel meeting.
- **The matter will then be closed as far as the school is concerned.**

If the complainant remains dissatisfied they can contact the School Complaints Unit (SCU). Further information can be obtained from the SCU by calling the National Helpline on **0370 000 2288** or going online at: www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus or by writing to:
Department for Education School Complaints Unit 2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Hatherley Infant School Complaint Form

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing Body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.



| | |
|--|--|
| Your name: | |
| Your Address: | |
| Daytime telephone number: | |
| Evening telephone number: | |
| Relationship with school eg parent of a child on the school's roll | |
| Child's name (if relevant to your complaint): | |

Please give concise details of your complaint, (including dates, names of witnesses etc), to allow the matter to be fully investigated:
You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Number of additional pages attached | |
|-------------------------------------|--|

What action, if any, have you already taken to try to resolve your complaint? (ie whom have you spoken with or written to and what was the outcome?)

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School use:

| | | | |
|--------------|--|------|--|
| Received by: | | Date | |
|--------------|--|------|--|

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------|--|
| Acknowledgement sent by: | | Date | |
|--------------------------|--|------|--|

Complaint referred to:

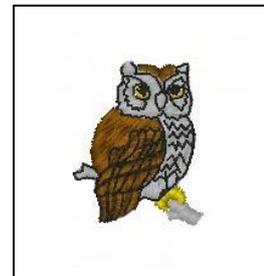
| | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| Name | | Date | |
|------|--|------|--|

| | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| Name | | Date | |
|------|--|------|--|

| | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| Name | | Date | |
|------|--|------|--|

Hatherley Infant School School Complaint Review Request Form

Please complete this form and return it to Head Teacher (or Clerk to the Governing body), who will acknowledge its receipt and inform you of the next stage in the procedure.



| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Your name: | |
| Your Address: | |
| Daytime telephone number: | |
| Evening telephone number: | |

Dear sir/madam
 I submitted a formal complaint to the school on
 Date:

My complaint was submitted to
 Name:

and I received a response from
 Name:
 on
 Date:

I have attached copies of my formal complaint and of the responses from the school.

I am dissatisfied with the way in which the procedure was carried out because:

You may continue on separate paper, or attach additional documents, if you wish.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Number of additional pages attached | |
|-------------------------------------|--|

What do you hope might reasonably contribute to a resolution of the problem at this stage?

Signature:

Date:

School use:

Received by:

Date

Acknowledgement
sent by:

Date

Complaint referred to:

Name

Date

Name

Date

Name

Date

