

Huntspill Community Federation



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Lead Person: Derek Nevell
Committee: Welfare
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INTRODUCTION

The Huntspill Community Federation considers it important that each child is valued as an individual & is taught in a safe environment that fosters the development of the child.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures. We will take informal concerns seriously & make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Complaints or concerns should, in the first instance, be brought to the attention of the class teacher or the Head Teacher. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Head Teacher then the complaint should be submitted to the Clerk of the Governors (who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint). If the matter cannot be resolved by Governors then the complaint can be submitted in writing to the Secretary of State.

We trust that the vast majority of concerns can be cleared up at school; we would much prefer you to voice your concerns when you have them to avoid them growing into a serious issue. We aim to be sympathetic to your concerns & strive to resolve issues in an open & fair manner.

THE PROCEDURE

1. School's (informal) Consideration	by appropriate member(s) of school staff; & if unresolved; by the headteacher.
2. Governors' Review	if the complainant feels that their concerns have not been addressed satisfactorily by the school staff.
3. Secretary of State	when the complainant has been through the earlier (ie school's internal) elements of the procedure but remains dissatisfied they may then complain to the Secretary of State.

1. SCHOOL'S (INFORMAL) CONSIDERATION:

We hope that the majority of concerns & complaints would not need to progress beyond this point. We would always attempt to resolve them straight away through the class teacher, or the school secretary or Headteacher, depending on who is first approached. On certain major issues, the Headteacher may decide to deal with concerns directly at the outset.

Parents/carers can raise concerns with members of staff without any formality, either in person, by telephone or in writing. If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved by the member of staff, or the person to whom it has been referred, the matter should then be passed to the Headteacher for investigation.

If the complaint is against the actions of the Headteacher, the complainant should be advised to contact the Chair of Governors who will consider how the complaint might most appropriately be addressed.

2. GOVERNORS' REVIEW:

Where a complainant has been through the previous levels of the procedure & are not happy with the response they are entitled to request a formal hearing by governors' panel.

To request a formal hearing by governors' panel parents must contact the 'clerk of governors' at the school providing the following information:

- Your name
- Your address & postcode
- Your daytime 'phone number
- Your child's name
- Your complaint about the school
- When you raised this with Headteacher
- When you received the Headteacher's response
- Your reasons for requesting a review

What happens next?

- a) You will receive an acknowledgement that your letter has been received.
- b) You will be invited to discuss your complaint with a Panel of Governors.
- c) Within 15 school days of meeting the Governors' Panel you will receive a full reply telling you the Panel's conclusions/decisions, explaining their reasons & informing you of any action that has been taken/recommended.

Complaints that have reached the formal Governors' review level will have done so because the complainant is unhappy with the headteacher's handling of, &/or response to, their concerns. The Governors' panel therefore needs to review/investigate how the complaint was dealt with by the school's staff &/or headteacher, decide whether the outcome/response was appropriate &, if not, the form of redress that is necessary.

3. SECRETARY OF STATE:

Very occasionally, a complainant will continue to be dissatisfied, having received the governors' response to their complaint & will wish to complain to the Secretary of State.

It is usually necessary to follow all internal complaints procedures before making a written complaint to the Secretary of State. However, if you feel that these procedures have not been followed correctly, you can complain.

The Secretary of State has a duty to consider all complaints raised but will only intervene where the governing body has acted unlawfully or unreasonably and where it is expedient or practical to do so.

The School Complaints Unit (SCU) considers complaints relating to LA maintained schools in England on behalf of the Secretary of State. The SCU will look at whether the complaints policy and any other relevant statutory policies were adhered to. The SCU also looks at whether statutory policies adhere to education legislation.

If you wish to make a complaint to the Secretary of State, please write to the Secretary of State at the following address, setting out in detail the nature of your complaint:

Department for Education
School Complaints Unit
2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

This policy is based on **Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2016** which can be found on: www.gov.uk/government/publications