

Complaints policy

Approved		Responsibility	Resources Committee
Review	3 years		



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Reviewed Jan 2010

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Policy review July 2020

Aims

Greenfields Junior School greatly values the relationship between the school and its stakeholders, and wishes to promote good communication at all times. The purpose of this policy is to provide a supportive framework in which stakeholders can raise concerns with the school so that these concerns can be discussed and a resolution achieved in a speedy, fair and equitable manner. This policy is based on the principle that, where at all possible, concerns and complaints will be dealt with informally, and stakeholders will be encouraged to share their concerns with a member of staff at the earliest opportunity. In the on the rare occasion where this is unsuccessful in resolving a complaint, the formal procedures outlined will give the complainant a route that ensures the issue is appropriately dealt with.

This policy includes the complaint procedures for Greenfields Junior School, which is one of the statutory policies listed by the Department for Education (DfE) that schools need to have in place and publish on their website, and as required by the Education Act 2002 (Section 29).

Supplementary information

DfE advice for the governing body on their obligations and duties under Section 29 of the Education Act is available in "Best practice advice for school complaints procedures 2016":

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-complaints-procedures>

This best practice advice should be read in conjunction with this policy.

It is recommended that the further guidance provided on Governor Services' website Complaints topic area is also reviewed:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/governors/education-governors-intranet/education-governors-secure-complaintspages.htm>

Principles

Governors and staff at Greenfields Junior School recognise that things can go wrong. In dealing with complaints, Greenfields Junior School will aim to:

- ❖ Strengthen parental confidence and relationships between parents, school and the wider community
- ❖ Resolve concerns through informal discussions at the earliest stage
- ❖ Be speedy, with well-defined timescales and named contacts

- ❖ Focus on resolution and review rather than blame
- ❖ Be accessible to people with disabilities, special needs or language barriers
- ❖ Promote confidentiality and discretion
- ❖ Include fair and transparent investigative processes for staff as well as complainants
- ❖ Be forthright in dealing with vexatious, abusive, malicious and anonymous complainants.
- ❖ Ensure that the policy and procedures are known to parents, staff and governors.

Scope of Policy

This policy should be used for all complaints about any provision of facilities or services that the school provides with the exceptions listed below, for which there are separate (statutory) procedures:

Exception 1

- Admissions to schools
- Statutory assessments of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- School re-organisation proposals
- Matters likely to require a Child Protection Investigation

For these exceptions concerns should be raised direct with local authorities (LA).

For school admissions, it will depend on who is the admission authority (either the school or the LA). Complaints about admission appeals for maintained schools are dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Exception 2

- Exclusion of children from school

Further information about raising concerns about exclusion can be found at:

www.gov.uk/schooldiscipline-exclusions/exclusions.

Exception 3

- Whistleblowing

The school has an internal whistleblowing procedure for employees and voluntary staff. Other concerns can be raised direct with Ofsted by telephone on: 0300 123 3155, via email at: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk or by writing to:

WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD.

The Department for Education is also a prescribed body for whistleblowing in education.

Exception 4

- Staff grievances and disciplinary procedures

These matters will invoke the school's internal grievance procedures. Complainants will not have the right to be informed of the outcome of any investigation.

Exception 5

- Complaints about services provided by other providers who may use school premises or facilities.

Providers should have their own complaints procedure to deal with complaints about service.

They should be contacted direct.

This policy should also be followed for complaints about the national curriculum, religious education and related matters. However, in this case, it is possible to appeal further to Children's Services if the school's procedures do not resolve the complaint.