



Complaints Policy

Adoption by Governing Body

..... (Signature of Chair of Governors)

..... (Date)

To Be Revised(Date)



Squirrels Heath Junior School

Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all children, and that the Head Teacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, there may be occasions when parents feel dissatisfied with aspects of the service we provide. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

2. Aims and objectives

Our school aims 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 and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

3. Initial Concerns

If a parent is concerned they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that children are happy at school and are making good progress. They always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take appropriate action.

School Complaints Procedure

Stage One (informal); complaint heard by a member of staff

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the phase leader. If the complainant feels that he/she would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff, the complainant may be referred to another senior staff member. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Stage Two (formal); complaint heard by the Head Teacher

Should a parent remain dissatisfied with a complaint, or the way it was handled at Stage One, the complainant needs to make an appointment to see the Head Teacher or in her absence, the Deputy Head. The Head Teacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. The head may delegate the task of collating the information to another member of staff but not the decision on the action to be taken. The Head Teacher may take notes on a complaint meeting record.

Stage Three (formal): complaint heard by Chair of Governors

Should a parent remain dissatisfied with a complaint, or the way it was handled at Stage Two, the complainant should write to the Chair of Governors to request that their complaint is considered further. This complaint must be made in writing (using the school complaint form in appendix 2), stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors who will respond using the correct procedure. (Please refer to appendix 1).

Stage Four (formal): complaint heard by Governing Bodies Complaints Appeal Panel

At this stage if the complainant remains dissatisfied, despite the Chair seeking to resolve the issue, the complainant should write to the Clerk to the Governing Body giving details of the complaint and asking that it is put before the appeal panel. The Chair, or if the Chair has been involved at any previous stage in the process, a nominated governor, will convene a GB complaints panel.

The governors' appeal hearing is the last school-based stage of the complaints process and is not convened merely to rubber-stamp previous decisions.

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.

The governing body may nominate a number of members with delegated powers to hear complaints at that stage, and set out its terms of reference. These can include:

- Drawing up its procedures;
- Hearing individual appeals;
- Making recommendations on policy as a result of complaints.

The procedure adopted by the panel for hearing appeals would normally be part of the school's complaints procedure. The panel can be drawn from the nominated members and may consist of three or five people. The panel may choose their own Chair.

Notification of the panel's decision

The Chair of the Panel needs to ensure that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response (including the reasons for the decision) within ten working days of the panel meeting.

The final stage of the appeal is to the Secretary of State for Education.

Complainants should write to The School Complaints Unit (SCU) at:

Department for Education
2nd Floor, Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

Appendix One

The Complaints Procedure

The Stages of Complaints

The three school-based stages are:

Stage one: complaint heard by member of staff

- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome

Stage two: complaint heard by **Head Teacher**

- Acknowledge receipt of complaint
- Write to complainant with outcome of investigation
- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome
- Offer escalation to Stage three if dissatisfied

Stage three: complaint heard by **Chair of Governors** (using complaints form)

- Acknowledge receipt of complaint
- Write to complainant with outcome of investigation
- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome
- Offer escalation to Stage four if dissatisfied

Stage four: complaint heard by **Governing Body's complaints panel**

- Issue letter inviting complainant to meeting
- Issue letter confirmed panel decision
- Ensure complaints co-ordinator informed of outcome
- Advise of escalation routes to the Secretary of State for Education

Appendix Two

Squirrels Heath Junior School – Complaint Form (Stage 4)

Please complete and return to Chair of Governors who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name:
Your relationship to the pupil:
Address: Postcode: Day time telephone number: Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details:

Signature:

Date:
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By who:
Complaint referred to:
Date: