

Complaints Procedure

PREAMBLE

The main purpose of this complaints procedure is to solve problems and to give parents a means to raise issues of concern and have them addressed.

Complainants will be treated respectfully during and after the course of any complaints investigation.

All members of staff should be aware of the complaints procedure and understand:

- The importance of attempting to resolve problems before they become formal complaints
- The importance of treating complaints respectfully
- The importance of good listening skills

Expressing Concerns

At this informal stage, the school will consider the best way of dealing with the concerns raised according to the circumstances. It is preferable for all concerned that concerns are resolved now rather than later.

Formal Complaints

Stage 1 – The Headteacher

It may be that the Headteacher has not been aware of the concern raised prior to this point. At this stage the Headteacher should consider whether the complainant can be satisfied without recourse to the Governing Body. The response to the parent will be as described in the paragraph 'Outcomes' below.

Action through a complaints procedure may lead to action being initiated under other procedures. This may be disciplinary or child protection procedures and consideration should be given to this possibility at the earliest stage. In these cases the investigations under the complaints procedure will be suspended until action under the other procedures (including appeals) has been concluded. The complainant should be advised if this is the case and also informed of the likely delay in the final resolution of their complaint.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint to the Governing Body

Where complaints cannot be resolved informally, complaints made to the Chair of the Governing Body will be referred using the form attached as Appendix A to this policy. Complaints will be accepted in writing or verbally. Where a complaint is accepted verbally it should be reported back to the complainant to ensure that details have been collected correctly.

A complaint will be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the Chair of the Governing Body. The acknowledgement will include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear about the progress of the investigation.

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Review Date: September 2014

Next Review Date: September 2015

Details of a complaint will be kept confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to their resolution.

COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

The school would like to hear from you if you:

- Are happy with the service it provides and would like to compliment the staff and its pupils
- Have any suggestions about how the school can improve the quality of its provision
- Have a complaint or concern. All complaints will be taken seriously and given full and proper consideration

The following has been recommended to schools for adoption by the Governing Body. If the school has adopted a different procedure they will inform you of that procedure on request.

EXPRESSING CONCERNS

The school is committed to providing a high quality service for your child. Sometimes things can go wrong which may lead you to express concerns.

Any concern should be raised with the member of staff concerned, your child's Head of Year or the Headteacher in the first instance. If the Headteacher considers it appropriate another member of staff may be asked to respond because they have a particular responsibility or are familiar with the circumstances that have caused you concern. We would hope that this would be sufficient to resolve the difficulty.

MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

If it has not been possible to resolve a difficulty informally then you can ask to use the formal complaints procedure

- **Step 1 - The Headteacher ***

If you have not already done so discuss your concerns with the Headteacher. You can do this by telephoning, writing a letter or arranging an appointment to meet with them.

You will receive a formal written response within 10 working day.

* If your complaint directly concerns the actions of the Headteacher, you may wish to proceed directly to step 2.

- **Step 2- The Governing Body**

Having discussed your concerns with the Headteacher and if you are dissatisfied with the response you can make a formal complaint to the Governing Body. The school will provide you with a form that you can choose to fill in for this purpose (Appendix A).

Send your completed form to the Chair of Governors at the school address. The complaint should contain the details of the problem and what you would like as an outcome of the investigation into the complaint. Keep a copy of the complaint form.

- your complaint will be investigated
- where appropriate a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body will be called
- if a Complaints Committee meets you will be invited to attend the meeting to make your complaint in person at a time convenient to you
- the Chairman of that Committee will write to you to inform you of the outcome of the Committee meeting.
- When considering your complaint the Chair of Governors may seek advice from officers of the Local Education Authority.

The Role of the Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors will need to consider whether the investigation can be completed by the Headteacher (who will already have been involved), the Chair him or herself, or whether to ask for external advice from, say, the District Education Officer.

On the conclusion of the investigation the Chair shall prepare a report for presentation to a Complaints Committee of the Governing Body. It would be appropriate for this committee to be made up of three Governors. The membership should not include the Headteacher and, according to the matter complained about, it may not be appropriate for other categories of Governor to be included.

The Committee should meet at a time convenient to the members of the Committee, the Chair (who will present the report), the parent (in order that they may make representations in person) and any witnesses.

Outcomes

In all cases where a complaint has been investigated the complainant will be given a written response covering:

- The complaint
- The scope of the investigation
- The conclusion of the investigation
- Any action which has resulted

The committee may wish to offer the complainant the opportunity to discuss the response.

If the investigation upholds the complaint, redress should be appropriate to the complaint and may include:

- An appropriate expression of regret
- Providing the solution desired by the complaint
- Changing the procedures to avoid future problems

The school will take responsibility for:

- Deciding who can take remedial action
- Ensuring that the remedy is carried out

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- Ensuring that any remedy is within the school's powers
- Ensuring the approach to remedies is reasonable and consistent

Where a complaint is not upheld the complainant must be given a response and informed of any further action that might be appropriate in their situation.

Chase Terrace Technology College

FORMAL COMPLAINT

Please complete this form and return it to the school who will then forward it to the Chair of the Governing Body. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

1 **Name**.....

2 **Address**.....

3 **Telephone Number (Home)**..... **(Work)**.....

4 **Name of Child**.....

5 **Details of the Complaint** (please include the date or period of time to which your complaint relates and confirm whether you have already expressed your concerns informally, and to whom and when)

6 **Do you have a Solution that you wish to suggest?**

Please attach copies of any more information you have to back up your complaint, such as letters or reports.

Signed..... **Date**.....