



Working and learning together for success

Sarisbury Church of England Junior School

Complaints Procedure

This document sets out a policy and procedure to be followed in the event of complaints being received by the school. The procedure is based upon '***Developing a General Complaints Procedure***', ***Guidance for schools in Hampshire***.

Aims

The school aims to resolve concerns for all its parents whatever their needs:

- through informal discussion whenever possible
- quickly with an agreed timescale and a named contact
- successfully and positively so that home / school relationships are strengthened
- with confidentiality, discretion and, above all, care for involved children
- using investigations which are open and fair to all.

The school will exercise discretion when dealing with anonymous, abusive or malicious complaints.

Informal stage

The school governors and staff invite parents to speak informally with the headteacher or appropriate member of staff whenever and as soon as they have a concern. It is in parents' interests that they make an appointment for this. The vast majority of parent concerns and complaints are dealt with quickly and successfully at this informal stage.

If a concern is not dealt with successfully at the informal stage, parents are advised to obtain a copy of the **School's Complaints Procedure** from the school office and implement Stage 1.

The school will provide assistance in following the procedure and in contacting the appropriate people for any parents who request this.

Stage 1

Parents are advised to write to the headteacher giving details of the concern and including copies of any relevant paperwork. (A form can be supplied to parents who prefer this.) The head, or senior member of staff, will acknowledge the written concern as soon as possible and will try to offer a full response within five days. If an in-depth investigation is required the parent will be informed and every effort will be made to provide a full response within 20 days. If dissatisfaction remains after the head's final response, or if the complaint is about the headteacher, parents are advised to implement Stage 2.

Stage 2

Parents should write to the chair of governors (a home address is available at the school) detailing the complaint, enclosing copies of any relevant paperwork and stating the reason/s for taking the matter to this stage. The acknowledgement and response timescale is the same as in Stage 1. Parents will be made aware of governors' powers which are largely strategic. The head is responsible for internal organisation, management and control of the school and for implementing governors' policies; the head is solely responsible for day to day decisions.

At this stage every effort will be made to resolve the issue successfully and avoid further disagreement. Discussion between the chair and the head will play a key role.

In the rare circumstance that the parent remains dissatisfied, the chair may offer a right of appeal to the governing body's complaints committee.

Stage 3

Parents who wish to appeal should make a written request to the clerk of the governing body - details can be obtained from the school office - they should describe the issue in detail and state why they are not satisfied with the outcomes of the previous stages.

Governors' powers will be re-emphasised and parents will be advised as to the form the treatment of the appeal will take. The clerk will arrange the appeal meeting for the panel of three governors with no previous involvement in the matter. (Parents should not write to all governors individually as this would make it difficult to find three governors without previous involvement.)

Within two school days, if possible, the clerk will inform the complainant of the panel's decision in writing and may advise that the parent meets with the head again to agree a way forward.

Stage 4

a. For complaints concerning the national curriculum or religious education parents can appeal further to the LA; details may be obtained from the school office.

b. For general complaints, Stage 3 is the final stage of the school's complaints procedure. If parents believe that the head and governors have not acted reasonably or not followed correct procedures, the only recourse is to the Secretary of State. If matters have reached this point, parents are advised to seek the assistance of the LA's complaints adviser.

1. These notes should be attached to every copy of the School Complaints Procedure used by the headteacher and governors.

2. When following the SCP, staff & governors should refer to:

'Developing a General Complaints Procedure', Guidance for schools in Hampshire.
'School Complaints Procedure' - DfE

This document gives important guidance including:

- *handling complaints;*
- *respective head & governor roles & responsibilities;*
- *the two forms of appeal consideration;*
- *governor complaints panel operations.*

3. The first two sections of the School Complaints Procedure (Aims & Informal stage) are intended to be communicated to all parents through the school website, prospectus and other relevant documents.

4. It is important that copies of the School Complaints Procedure are kept in the school office so that they are immediately available to parents, the headteacher and governors.

5. Copies of the LEA guidance document referred to above should be retained with the School Complaints Procedure.