



CHOLLERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND AIDED FIRST SCHOOL

Be the best you can be through:

challenge, nurture, inspiration, respect, happiness, inclusion, in a safe, loving Christian family.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

From time to time there may be things which parents / carers are worried about, not happy with or which they need explained more clearly. At Chollerton First School we do our best to be accessible and to speak with parents as quickly as possible.

We have an open door policy and parents are able to talk to staff on a daily basis, either before or after school, or at a time allocated during the day.

Stage One (Informal)

- If parents are worried about any areas of school life, they should get in touch with school, no matter how small the problem seems. Hopefully this will resolve the situation quickly. However, if parents feel they need to make a complaint, there are more formal procedures for dealing with them.

Stage Two (Informal)

- If it is a really serious complaint parents should telephone or write to Mrs Glenwright, the Headteacher. Parents should do this as early as possible and not leave the complaint until the routine parents' consultation evenings. Staff are always happy to do their very best to resolve difficulties and complaints.

Stage Three

- When it has not been possible to resolve a problem through the 'Informal' procedures, then the formal procedure may be operated. The first stage of the formal procedure is the consideration of the complaint by the School Governing Body. The complainant may submit written evidence to the Governing Body and will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the issues.
- The Clerk to the Governing Body is Vicki Evans, who can be contacted at Northumberland County Council.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

This document sets out the school's procedure for addressing complaints. It should be used only when informal attempts to resolve problems have been unsuccessful. If you have any concerns about the school or the education provided, please discuss the matter with your child's teacher at the earliest opportunity.

Please note that this procedure does not apply to issues concerning admission appeals, exclusion appeals, and decisions about your child's special educational needs or grievances by school staff. These are the subject of separate complaints procedures. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from school.

All other complaints are handled by the school according to the arrangements set out below.

Aims and Objectives

The school will give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them fairly and honestly. We will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and aim to resolve it through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

Framework of Principles

This policy will: -

- be easily accessible and published;
- be simple to use and understand;
- be impartial;
- be non-adversarial;
- allow swift handling with established time limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensure a full and fair investigation by an independent person where necessary;
- respect people's desire for confidentiality, wherever possible (some information sharing may be necessary to carry out a thorough investigation);
- address all points of issue, providing an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- provide information to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

First Stage: Informal

Every effort should be made to resolve the difficulty informally in discussion with either the class teacher or the Headteacher.

Second Stage: Formal Headteacher

If you feel that a concern has not been addressed through informal discussion with the class teacher, and you wish to have the matter formally investigated by an appropriate person from the school, please write to the head teacher outlining your concern.

If the matter is about: -

- the day to day running of the school
- the interpretation of school policies
- the actions or inactions of staff at the school

it will be formally investigated by the head teacher.

If the matter is about: -

- school policies as determined by the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the governing body
- the actions or inactions of the Headteacher

then you will be asked to complete a formal complaint form which is obtainable from the Clerk to the Governors.

Third Stage: Formal Complaint – Governor Review

Your formal complaint will be investigated by the Chair of Governors or a Governor nominated by the Chair.

The person carrying out the investigation will review the way in which the complaint has been handled by the school and ensure that the issues have been dealt with properly and fairly. He / she will normally write to you with the outcome of this process within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint.

If it becomes apparent that the complaint is a disciplinary or capability issue, then the matter will be dealt with by the following appropriate procedure rather than the complaints procedure. You will be notified if this is the case but you are not entitled to know which procedure or the final outcome.

Fourth Stage: Formal Complaint – Governor Hearing

If you are not satisfied with the result from the Stage 3 review, you may choose to refer your complaint to Stage 4 of the procedure. This must be done in writing to the school within 15 working days of the completion of Stage 3.

If the complainant is not satisfied after the Chairperson or nominated Governor has completed that review at Stage 3, a panel of 3 Governors will meet to consider the complaint and make a final decision about it on behalf of the Governing Body.

The panel will consist of Governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint, or connection with the complainant. The meeting will normally take place within 15 working days of your request.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend, accompanied by a friend / partner if you wish, to put your case. The Headteacher will be given the same opportunities. The panel will write to you with its conclusion within 10 working days of the meeting.

The decision of the panel is final. If you are not satisfied with the way the Governors have dealt with this matter you may wish to put your complaint to the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body monitors the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis and consider the need for any changes to the procedure.

Date approved by the Governing Body:

Signed by -

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Reviewed: Autumn 2024

Date of next review: Autumn 2025