



Complaints Policy 2016

Date Approved.....

Signed Chair of Governors

Review Date	Type of Review	Comments	Initials
Sept 2012		New Policy	
Autumn 2016	Governors	Reviewed Autumn 2016	

Park End Primary School School Complaints Policy

This document sets out the policy for dealing with comments, grievances and complaints. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Complaints procedure.

This policy should be used for:

- Complaints relating to the schooling of your child
- Complaints about the education and care provided to pupils at the school
- Complaints about the school's operational arrangements

This policy is limited to matters which can reasonably be investigated and therefore complaints should relate to matters which have occurred within the last 12 months.

Status

Section 29 of the Education Act 2002 states the need to have in place a procedure to deal with complaints relating to the school and to any community facilities or services the school provides. The law also requires the complaints procedure to be publicised.

Purpose

The school's values are concerned with meeting the needs of pupils, parents and other stakeholders. The governing body believes that feedback is an important ingredient in self-evaluation and raising standards. All stakeholders should feel that their concerns or complaints can be voiced and will be considered seriously. The school takes informal concerns seriously and aims to resolve them at the earliest stage in order to reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints. The underlying principle is that concerns will be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. The requirement to have a complaints procedure will not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. Staff will endeavour to resolve issues on the spot.

Formal procedures will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

Applicability

The policy shall apply to all employees and governors of the school. It is the shared responsibility of the Head Teacher and the Chair of the Governing Body to ensure that these groups are made aware of the policy and procedure.

The Complaints Procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by **informal** means wherever possible;
- be easily **accessible** and **publicised**;
- be **simple** to understand and use;
- 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 panel *where necessary*;
 - respect people's desire for **confidentiality**;
 - address all the points at issue and provide an **effective** response and **appropriate** redress, where necessary;
 - provide **information** to the school's senior management team so that services can be improved.

Roles and responsibilities

This section of the policy is taken from the separate document: School Complaints Procedure, which explains the process in more detail.

In brief the procedure is as follows:

Stage one:

Complaint/concern heard by staff member (informal);

Stage two:

- Complaint heard by Head Teacher (formal) or
- Complaint is heard by the Chair of Governing Body (if complaint is about the Head Teacher) (formal);

Stage three:

Complaint heard by Governing Body's Complaints Panel (review);

A dissatisfied complainant can always take a complaint to the next stage.

The Complaints Policy and Procedure are publicised to all stakeholders through:

- the school prospectus;
- the information given to new parents when their children join the school;
- the home-school agreement;
- home school bulletins or newsletters;
- a specific complaints leaflet which includes a form on which a complaint can be made;
- posters displayed in areas of the school that will be used by the public, such as reception or the main entrance;
- the school website.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

All documentation regarding complaints (including notes of any related meetings and

telephone calls), the action taken and the final outcome will be recorded and a summary included in the Headteacher's next report to governors.

The governing body will monitor the level and nature of complaints and review the outcomes on a regular basis to ensure the effectiveness of the procedure and make

changes where necessary. Complaints information shared with the whole governing

body will not name individuals.

The monitoring and review of complaints by the school and the governing body is a useful tool in evaluating the school's performance, and will contribute to school

improvement. Any underlying issues identified will be addressed.

Record Keeping

- All complaints will be responded to in writing.
 - At Stage 1 – even though this is an informal stage, the complainant will receive a reply in writing and a copy should be retained for reference.
 - At Stages 2 & 3 – there should be clear communication in writing throughout the handling of the complaint. A copy of all written communication should be retained for reference.
- Only complaints relating to the schooling of a specific child would be kept within the child's files. Other issues will be filed separately in a secure location and will be retained for a period of 7 years.

Further Recourse

From 1 August 2012 complaints about maintained schools not resolved by the school that would have been considered by the LGO or the local authority should be addressed to the Secretary of State for Education.

Local authorities and the LGO will continue to be responsible for considering complaints about local authority services.

Review by the Local Authority

Where the complainant can provide written grounds that demonstrate that the Governing Body may have acted unreasonably or failed to follow this procedure, s/he may request that the Local Authority review the situation. This will be an officer of the LA, except in the case of Voluntary Aided Schools where a Diocesan Officer, as agreed with the Diocese, may conduct the review.

It is anticipated that the LA/Diocese would intervene **only in very rare cases** where the reviewing officer believed that the Governing Body may have acted procedurally incorrectly or arrived at an outcome which appeared, in all the circumstances, to be unreasonable.

Complaining to the Secretary of State for Education

- The decision of the Governors' Complaints Committee is final but Under section 496 or 497 of the Education Act 1996, complainants have a right of appeal to the Secretary of State for Education on the grounds that:
- A governing body or Local Authority is acting or proposing to act unreasonably; or
- The governing body or the Local Authority has failed to discharge its duties under the Act.
- The Secretary of State would not take action until the school procedures have been completed.

- Contact Details: Public Communications Unit, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT Tel 0870 000 2288 complaints@dfes.gov.uk

Complaints Procedure

CONCERN OR COMPLAINT RECEIVED



INFORMAL PROCEDURE	SCHOOL ACTION
Informal discussion with the relevant class teacher or other relevant member of staff usually resulting in resolution to the issue. If the complaint is about the Head Teacher – proceed to Stage 2	The person is informed of the action to be taken to resolve the issue. If they are not satisfied they should be provided with a copy of the school’s complaints procedure and information on how to proceed to stage 1.



FORMAL PROCEDURE- STAGE 1	SCHOOL ACTION
The complaint is submitted, either verbally or in writing, to the Head Teacher.	The Head Teacher acknowledges receipt within 5 school days and provides a full written response within 15 school days. Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to stage 2.



FORMAL PROCEDURE – STAGE 2	SCHOOL ACTION
A written complaint is submitted to the chair of governors.	The chair acknowledges receipt within 5 school days and provides a full written response with 15 school days. Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to stage 3.



FORMAL PROCEDURE – STAGE 3	SCHOOL ACTION
Complainant writes to the chair or clerk of governors requesting that the complaint be heard by the complaints committee.	Clerk arranges for complaints committee to meet between 12 and 20 school days from receipt of letter and informs the complainant of findings with 5 school days of hearing. Information is provided to the complainant on how to progress the complaint to the Secretary of State and Local Government Ombudsman.

FURTHER RECOURSE	
Complainant writes to the Secretary of State or the Local Government Ombudsman.	The Secretary of State may intervene if a governing body or the Education Department has acted unreasonably. The Ombudsman only investigates issues of maladministration.

To whom at the school did you report the problem?

What was the response?

Have you complained to the school about this before? Yes/No *(delete as appropriate)

If so, to whom, and when?

What would you like to see done to resolve your complaint and bring the matter to an acceptable closure for yourself and the school?

Signed Date

(Parent/Guardian)