

HAZELDENE SCHOOL



**COMPLAINTS POLICY
REVISED SEPTEMBER 2016**

SIGNED DATE.....
 HEADTEACHER

SIGNED DATE
 CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

TO BE REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2018

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

The majority of issues raised by parents or the community are concerns rather than complaints. Hazeldene School is committed to taking concerns seriously, at the earliest stage without the need for formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, the parent may wish or be asked to follow the school's formal complaints procedure. For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within three months of the incident occurring. **If a complaint is older than three months it will not be investigated.**

Aims

The aim of the policy is to resolve the complaint as fairly and speedily as possible. Formal complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. The school is committed to working with parents and the community so that each child reaches their full potential. Wherever the school makes mistakes, these will be accepted and action taken to ensure that they don't happen again.

The 4 Stages of the Complaints Procedure.

Stage 1 - A concern is raised with a member of staff.

Stage 2 - Formal complaint is heard by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Stage 3 - Formal complaint is heard by the Headteacher.

Stage 4 - Formal complaint is heard by the Governing Body.

Stage 1 - Raising a concern.

Concerns can be raised with the school at any time and will often generate an immediate response, which will resolve the concern. The school requests that parents must make first contact the class teacher. On some occasions concerns raised may require an investigation, or discussion with others, in which case the parent will receive an informal but informed response within a day or two. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with at this stage. However if the parent is not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, they are required to write or call the school within 10 working days and state what they would like the school to do. The school will then deal with their complaint at the next stage.

Stage 2 - Formal complaint heard by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Formal complaints will initially be heard by a member of the senior leadership team. The complaint can either be put in writing or via a telephone call to the office. The complaint will be logged, including the date that it was received. The school will normally acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working days. In most cases this will include a report on the action the school has taken to resolve the issue.

Alternatively a meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter further.

Appointments can be made through the school office. This meeting will take place within 10 working days, although on most occasions it will be much sooner than that. The aim will always be to resolve the matter as speedily as possible. However if the parent is not satisfied with the result at stage 2 they should write to the school within 10 working days of getting their response. They will need to explain why they are not satisfied with the response.

Stage 3 - Complaint heard by the Headteacher.

If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 2, the complaint **MUST** be put in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will arrange for a further investigation which may include a meeting. Following the investigation, the Headteacher will normally give a written response within 10 working days. If the parent is dissatisfied with the result at Stage 3 they will need to let the school know within 10 working days of getting the response.

Stage 4 - Complaint heard by the Governing Body.

If the matter has still not been resolved at Stage 3, then the parent will need to write to the Chair of Governors giving details of the complaint. The Chair or a nominated governor will convene a complaints panel. The hearing will normally take place within 10 working days of the receipt of the written request for a Stage 4 investigation.

The aim of the appeal panel hearing is to impartially resolve the complaint and to achieve reconciliation between the school and the parent.

As part of the investigation a meeting may be arranged to discuss the complaint with the parent. All parties will be notified of the Panel's decision in writing within 3 working days after the date of the hearing.

NB In cases where the matter concerns the conduct of the Head teacher, the Headteacher and Chair of governors will be informed of the complaint. The Chair of Governors will arrange for the matter to be investigated. In cases where the complaint involves a member of the Governing Body, the member will be told of the

complaint. The Governors appeal hearing is the last school based stage of the complaints process.

Vexatious Complaints

If properly followed, a good complaints procedure will limit the number of complaints that become protracted. However, there will be occasions when, despite all stages of the procedures having been followed, the parent remains dissatisfied. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the chair of the GB is able to inform them in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.

If after this school based process the complaint is still not resolved to the parent/carer's satisfaction, they should write to the Secretary of State for Education.

Written by Helen Ward September 2016
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