

## Complaints Policy

Written by: Carl Rogers Adopted by Governors: January 2023 Date for review: January 2025
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### Introduction

We endeavour to ensure that our school provides the very best education for all our children. However, we acknowledge that parents may have grievance over specific matters that may result in a complaint. The following policy sets out the procedure that we follow in such cases.

### Aims and Objectives

Our school aims to be fair, open and adhere to our core values and Christian foundations when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

### The Complaints Process

#### *How to share a concern*

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing, they must in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress. They always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's learning.

#### *What to do if the matter is not resolved through informal discussion*

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with either the School Leadership team or the Headteacher. These Senior Leaders consider any such complaint very seriously and investigate each case thoroughly. We hope that most complaints escalated to this level will be resolved at this stage.

#### *Sharing a concern about the School Leadership Team or Headteacher*

Should a parent have a complaint about the School Leadership Team, they should arrange a meeting with the Headteacher. Should the complaint be about the Headteacher, they must first make an informal approach to one of the members of the Governing Body, who is obliged to investigate it. The Governor in question will do all they can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint, as outlined below. A list of governor names is available from the school website.

#### *How to take the matter further*

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the Governing Body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

The Governing Body must consider all written complaints within three weeks of receipt. The complaint will be acknowledged in writing by, or on behalf of, the Chair of the Governing Body. The acknowledgement should include an explanation of what will happen next, time scales involved and the name of the person from whom they will next hear in relation to the progress of their investigation. Details of a complaint should be confidential except in so far as they need to be shared with people who might contribute to the resolution. 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 themselves, or whether to refer the complaint to the Complaints Committee of the Governing Body. If the latter course of action is followed, the Chair shall present a full report to the Committee and, if necessary, external advice may be sought from the Local Authority.

Complaints against the Chair of Governors or any individual governor should be made by writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body.

The Complaints Committee is comprised of four Governors. Membership should not include the Headteacher and, according to nature of the complaint, it may not be appropriate for certain categories of Governor to be included.

The Committee will arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint, and invite the complainant, and any witnesses, to attend the meeting, so that they can explain the complaint in more detail. The school gives the complainant at least three days' notice of the meeting.

After hearing all of the evidence, the Governors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing within 48 hours of the meeting. The Governors will do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

### **Recording complaints**

Our school will ensure that we comply with our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Our school will ask for complaints to be made by using a complaint form or in writing, however the complainant may have communication preferences due to disability or learning difficulties and school must allow alternative methods of contact:

- A complaint may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing;
- In order to prevent any later challenge or disagreement over what was said, brief notes of meetings and telephone calls will be kept and a copy of any written response added to the record. Where there are communication difficulties, we may use recording devices to ensure the complainant is able to access and review the discussions at a later point;
- We will record the progress of the complaint and the final outcome. The headteacher or complaints coordinator will be responsible for these records and hold them centrally.
- We are aware that complainants have a right to copies of these records under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

### **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 complainant.
- Changing the procedures to avoid future problems.

**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.

### **Allegations against Staff or volunteers**

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children (whether in a paid or unpaid capacity) must be taken seriously.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children. This applies to allegations against paid and unpaid workers, volunteers, casual and agency workers or anyone self-employed. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children'

**All allegations that meet the criteria must be reported to the LADO by contacting the First Point of Contact (FPOC) on 03456 789021.**

### **Who to appeal to next**

Parents and carers do not have a general right of appeal should they disagree with the Governors' decision. They may, however, raise the matter with the Local Authority, Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education, or the Secretary of State, if they consider the complaint wasn't investigated properly and fairly. However, if the Governors have considered the complaint reasonably, neither the Local Authority, Lichfield Diocese nor the Secretary of State can reverse their decision.



Executive Headteacher



Chair of Governors

## Complaints

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.

**Name:**.....

**Address:**.....

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**Telephone No.:**.....

**Name of Child:**.....

**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).**

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**Do you have a suggestion for change?**

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

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