

OAKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL - COMPLAINTS POLICY

At Oakfield Primary School we seek to work in close partnership with parents and children to ensure that we offer a high quality education within a supportive caring environment. As a school we value our relationships with the community. Consequently we offer a range of opportunities during the school year to discuss any concerns parents may have about their child's progress or arrangements for learning.

This policy is intended to set out how the school will deal with general complaints and does not cover those aspects of school life where the law sets specific complaints procedures i.e. admissions, exclusions, complaints about the delivery of the curriculum and the provision of collective worship and religious education. Parents who are not satisfied with an LEA decision about special needs assessments may appeal to the SEN tribunal.

Aims:

- An accessible and easily understood procedure for complaints
- Encourage parents to express their views reasonably at the earliest opportunity, through the appropriate channels
- To aid communication between home and school
- Assure parents that making a complaint would not adversely affect their child.

Informal Approach

Concerns may arise at other times and parents should contact the school straight away and ask to discuss the matter with the appropriate member of staff e.g. class teacher. The majority of complaints are resolved quickly and effectively.

Stage 1 - Headteacher

If the matter has not been resolved informally, the parent should write to the Headteacher who will look into the complaint. The Headteacher (or designate) will acknowledge the letter in 5 working days and respond to the complaint within 20 working days. In most cases, the complaint will be dealt with satisfactorily at this stage. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, the parent is advised to contact the Chair of Governors. Documentation will be filed in the Headteachers office.

Stage 2 - Chair of Governors

If discussions with the Headteacher do not resolve the complaint, a parent may write formally to the Chair of Governors, via the school address, who will review the issues and the Headteacher's response. The Chair of Governors will try to

resolve the concerns and then inform the complainant about the conclusion within 20 days.

Stage 3 – the Governing Body's Complaints Panel

If, in the very rare circumstance, a parent remains dissatisfied with the outcomes and wishes to pursue the complaint, they may request that the Governing Body's complaints panel hears the case. The request should be made in writing to the clerk to the Governing Body, via the school address and should include information about the: -

- nature of the original complaint
- steps taken by the Headteacher or designated member of staff to deal with the matter and the Headteacher's response
- Chair of Governor's response
- Reasons for pursuing the complaint beyond the Chair of Governors

The Complaints Panel Meeting

The clerk will arrange a meeting within 20 days of the request and inform parents about the process and agenda.

The complaints panel will consist of three governors with no previous involvement in the matter. For complaints specifically about the national curriculum, religious education and related matters, members will, where possible, be drawn from the Governors' curriculum committee.

Parents will be given the opportunity to submit additional supporting information prior to the meeting. The panel will then meet with all parties to consider both written and oral submissions.

An example of a typical agenda would be: -

1. Introductions
2. Oral submissions by the complainant
3. Questions from the school
4. Oral response by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
5. Questions by the complainant
6. Brief summary by the complainant, with no new information
7. Brief summary by the school, with no new information

Parents and the Headteacher will then be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 15 working days.

Once parents have followed the school's procedure if parents would like further advice they may contact the Complaints Adviser at the LEA - 01962 846572.

If a complaint is about the National Curriculum, Religious Education or related matters the school has adopted the LEA procedure - 'Hampshire's guide for schools' and parents'.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Equal Opportunities policy
- Racial Equality policy
- Hampshire Guidance - Developing a general complaints procedure

Policy Reviewed: April 2008

Date of next review: April 2011