

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Guidance for Parents/Carers

If the Headteacher is the subject of the complaint, parents/carers should contact the Chair of Governors to discuss the complaint by writing to him at the school address. The school will forward the letter to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will then contact parents/carers to discuss the complaint.

All other complaints should be discussed with the Headteacher. Parents/carers should contact the school and arrange an appointment. It is helpful if concerns are put in writing and sent to the Headteacher prior to the appointment so that she is able to consider the situation prior to the appointment.

In a very small number of cases, the matter may not be resolved with the involvement of the Headteacher. When this happens, the complaint should be directed to the Governing Body. Parents/carers should put the complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors and send it to him at the school address. The Chair of Governors will then contact parents/carers to discuss the complaint.

If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Chair of Governors, parents/carers can ask for the complaint to be considered by the Governing Body's Complaints Committee. This committee will hear the complaint and decide what action, if any, should be taken. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of the committee's decision.

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can make this known to the Local Authority.

The Local Authority does not normally investigate complaints directly. If a complaint is made either in writing or verbally to the Director of Education or to any officer of the Local Authority, the Governing Body of the school is made aware of the complaint and is requested to deal with it through the adopted procedure. Further action can only be taken if it can be demonstrated that the agreed procedure has not already been followed. The Local Authority will, however, try to mediate and find a possible solution to the problem.

The last recourse for complaints is to the Government Department for Education.

### Complaints Committee Procedure

On receipt of a complaint, the Chair of Governors should write to the complainant explaining that the complaint is being investigated. This letter should also explain the process and timescales of the investigation. The Governing Body should aim to complete the complaints process within two school weeks of receiving the complaint, and should update the complainant on progress after two weeks if the process has not been completed. It will be for the Complaints

Committee to decide whether or not it is appropriate to interview the complainant as part of the investigation.

If the Complaints Committee agrees that the outcomes of the report could lead to disciplinary action being taken against an employee of the school, the Complaints Committee should pass the matter to the Disciplinary Committee. In this case, it is not the responsibility of the Complaints Committee to make a judgement about whether the employee is culpable, only that there is a case to answer. The Chair of the Complaints Committee should write to the complainant to explain that the matter has been passed to the Disciplinary Committee for further consideration. At this point, the Disciplinary Procedure adopted by the Governing Body should be followed.

Once the final outcome of the complaint has been determined, the Chair of Governors should write to the complainant explaining, in general terms, the outcome of the investigation and the action taken by the Governing Body.

When dealing with complaints, governors should at all times bear in mind the need for confidentiality. If a complaint leads to discipline procedures, these cannot be invoked in cases where it can be shown that there has been a breach of confidentiality during the period of investigation.

The Governing Body should, where necessary, seek advice from the Local Authority on any procedural matters.

**Date adopted by Governing Body: Review date:**

**Signed:..... (Chair of Governors)**