

# COMPLAINTS POLICY



<b>Committee Responsible for the Policy</b>	Full Governing Body (FGB)
<b>Date Policy Approved by the FGB</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2016
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	Summer 2017
<b>Name of Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lesley Spicer

## 1. Introduction

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

## 2. Aim of this Policy

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest 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.

## 3. The Complaints Process

### 3.1 How to share a concern

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school they should, 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 affects the child's progress.

Should the complaint be regarding the Headteacher then parents should seek to meet with the Chair of Governors for preliminary discussions.

Where a parent feels the complaint has not been resolved through an informal discussion with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher.

We anticipate that the majority of concerns will achieve a satisfactory resolution at this informal stage.

However, should all parties not be satisfied with the outcome of this meeting then parents will be informed of the next stage of the process.

### 3.2 Stage 1

Parents will be advised to write to the Headteacher, giving details of their concern. The Headteacher will respond to the parent in writing, or by phone, as soon as possible. We will aim to acknowledge the complaint or offer a full response within 5 school days. The response may take the form of an invitation to a meeting or a letter.

If the complaint requires an in-depth investigation, the Headteacher will acknowledge this and let the complainant know that a response will take longer than usual. In any case the investigation and response preparation will normally take place within 20 school days.

The Headteacher will follow up any meeting with parents by summarising the main points in a letter. This may prevent any misunderstanding and ensure that all parties have a clear record of progress or agreements.

If a parent remains dissatisfied, the Headteacher will decide when to give a final response and refer the parent to Stage 2 of the complaints process.

### 3.3 Stage 2

Parents will be advised to write to the Chair of Governors outlining their complaint and explaining the reasons for pursuing it beyond the Headteacher's response and enclosing any relevant paperwork.

Should parents need support in making a written complaint; they will be offered the option of dictating their complaint to a member of the office staff.

The Chair will aim to acknowledge the complaint or offer a full response in writing within 5 school days.

If the complaint requires an in-depth investigation, the Chair will acknowledge this and let the complainant know that a full response will take longer than usual. Normal practice is to investigate the complaint and prepare a response within 20 school days.

This stage offers an opportunity for achieving conciliation between all parties.

If a parent is unhappy with the outcome the Chair of Governors may offer a right of appeal to the Governing Body's complaints panel. Individual complaints will not be heard by the whole Governing Body at any stage, as this could compromise the impartiality of any complaints panel.

### 3.4 Stage 3

Parents who wish to appeal to the Governors will be advised to request this in writing to the Clerk of the Governing Body who can be contacted at: [Clerk.Governors@peelcommon-inf.hants.sch.uk](mailto:Clerk.Governors@peelcommon-inf.hants.sch.uk) or via the school office.

Parents should describe the issues in detail and say why they are dissatisfied with the outcomes of the previous stage.

The Clerk to the Governing Body should write to the complainant within 3 school days of receiving the complaint. The acknowledgement should inform the complainant that the complaint is to be heard by 3 impartial members of the Governing Body. The letter should also explain that the complainant has the right to submit any further documents relevant to the complaint. These documents must be received by the Clerk in time to be sent out to the three governors at least 48 hours before they meet.

The school aims to resolve any formal complaints to the Governing Body within 20 school days. If this is not possible then a letter explaining why not will be sent.

The Clerk to the Governors should arrange to convene a Governors' Complaints Panel elected from impartial members of the Governing Body.

After hearing all the evidence, the governors consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

### 3.5 Who to appeal to next

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the Local Authority (LA). Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LA. A further meeting is chaired by an independent person, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then they are entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

## **4. Monitoring and Review**

4.1 The Governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors examine this log on an annual basis.

4.2 Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.

**5. Procedure for Handling Complaints**

