



Discovery Schools
Academy Trust



Farndon Fields Primary School

Complaints Procedure **2018-2019**

Approved by: Nikki Matthew

Last reviewed on: 15.02.19

Next review due by: March 2020

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

At Farndon Fields Primary School we strive to provide excellent education and care for our pupils at all times. However, we accept that occasionally things can go wrong. This procedure describes how parents may make a complaint and to whom, if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of our provision.

We value our partnership with parents and will endeavour to resolve your concern or complaint as quickly as possible. To help us properly investigate your complaint we ask that you bring it to the attention of the school as soon as possible, and in general, no later than 3 months after the event that gave rise to the complaint.

This procedure sets out how you may raise a concern or make a complaint and what can be expected at each stage of the process.

Procedure

Stage 1: Dealing with concerns informally

We hope that most concerns can be resolved at an early stage with a conversation with the class teacher.

Class teachers are available at the start and end of the day, or it may be more appropriate to make an appointment so that more time can be given to address your concern. Appointments can be made through the school office.

If your concern is not resolved at this stage, you may wish to make a complaint by proceeding to the formal stage of this procedure.

To remove the possibility of a repeated concern only being dealt with informally, if the same concern (e.g. bullying concern but different incidents logged) is repeatedly raised more than twice then it will be treated as a complaint and will automatically move to stage 2 where an appointment to meet with a senior leader will be offered (see below).

Concerns and formal complaints with regards to pupil safety and well-being are logged via the schools CPOMS pupil safeguarding and wellbeing reporting system and reviewed regularly by a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

Formal Stages

Stage 2 – Referral to Headteacher/Senior Leader

If your concerns have not been resolved at stage one, you can request appointment with the Headteacher or Senior Leader.

Please provide us with as much detail as you can to help us investigate your complaint using the attached Complaint Form.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 school days and a mutually convenient time arranged to discuss your complaint.

The Senior Leader will then investigate your complaint and will let you have a response within 15 school days. If this is not possible, you will be advised of when they expect to be able to provide this information.

Your senior leaders are: -

- Headteacher – Mrs N Matthew
- Deputy Headteacher – Mrs S Harrison

Stage 3: - Referral to the Advisory Board

If your complaint is still not resolved, you can refer your complaint to the Advisory Board within 10 school days of getting the Stage 2 response.

Please write to the Chair of the Advisory Board, care of the school, providing a copy of the written complaint, the school's response and details of why you are not satisfied with the outcome.

A member of the Advisory Board will acknowledge receipt within 5 school days of receiving the complaint and provide a timescale for response.

The Advisory Board Member will review your complaint, the actions taken by the school to resolve it and provide you with a written response.

Stage 4 – Complaints Panel Hearing

If you are unhappy with the Stage 3 outcome you can request a complaint panel hearing.

A complaints panel hearing is a review of the decisions taken after investigation of the complaint. The panel will not consider any new areas of complaint which have not been previously raised as part of the complaint's procedure.

A request for a hearing before the complaints panel must be put in writing to the Clerk to the Advisory Board at the school within 10 school days of the stage 3 decision being communicated.

The Clerk to the Advisory Board will acknowledge your request within 5 school days. The Clerk to the Advisory Board will make arrangements to convene a panel and will advise you of the date and time.

The panel will consist of three members who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

One member of the panel will be independent of the management and running of the school and Trust. This means that the independent complaint panel member will not be a DSAT Trustee, an Advisory Board Member of the school, or an employee of either the Trust or the school. For the avoidance of doubt, an Advisory Board Member from another Trust school or Cluster Board Governor from a different cluster may be the independent complaint panel member, as long as they are not an employee of school or the Trust.

As parent/carer you will be invited to attend the panel hearing and may be accompanied by another person, for example a relative or friend.

Every effort will be made to enable the hearing to take place within 25 school days of receipt of the request. However, please note that the panel will not normally sit during school holidays.

The panel will hear your complaint and make their findings and recommendations. They will decide if:

- the complaint investigation process was carried out fairly
- the outcomes were reasonable
- any more can be done to help resolve your issue

The decision, findings and any recommendations will be confirmed in writing (this may be by email) to you, normally within 5 school days of the hearing.

The decisions, findings and any recommendations will also be available for inspection by the Board of Trustees, the Trust Executive Leadership Team, the headteacher and where relevant they will be provided to the person who is the subject of the complaint.

Further rights of appeal

The panel hearing is final stage of review for any complaint within the school and Trust but, if you are still unhappy, you can refer your complaint to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

The ESFA can only look at complaints that have followed all stages of the procedure. To refer your complaint to the DfE please click [here](#).

Confidentiality

A written record including the actions taken by the school will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they were resolved at a formal stage or proceeded to a panel hearing.

Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except where access is requested by the Secretary of State or where disclosure is required in the course of a school's inspection or under other legal authority.

In accordance with data protection principles, details of individual complaints will be kept only for as long as is considered to be reasonably necessary in the circumstances.

Anonymous Complaints

The school will not investigate anonymous complaints under the procedure. Anonymous complaints will be referred to the Headteacher who will decide what, if any, action should be taken.

Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

The school is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high-quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with our school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

The school defines unreasonable behaviour as that which hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school. Complainants should try to limit their communication with the school that relates to their complaint, while the complaint is being progressed. In these scenarios, the school may implement a tailored

communications strategy such as restricting the method of communication or putting in place a single point of contact.



Complaints Form

Your Name	
Pupil's Name (if relevant)	
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant)	
Please give details of your complaint.	
What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?	
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?	
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.	
Signed:	
Date:	
Office Use:	
Date acknowledgement sent:	Complaint referred to:
By who:	Date: