

# Testwood School Complaints Policy

Key Responsibility area:	JP/PCW/S/3
Last Review:	March 2017
Next Review:	March 2020



## A) Philosophy

Every complaint is a matter of concern to the Headteacher and will be investigated with due urgency and thoroughness. Whenever a complaint is upheld, every effort will be made to rectify the issue and, if necessary, action will be taken to try to prevent a reoccurrence of the problem. The Headteacher will not investigate anonymous complaints or allegations but confidentiality will be respected and the identity of informants will be protected whenever necessary.

## B) Timescales

Complaints to the Headteacher will normally be acknowledged within three working days of receipt and a response will usually be provided within ten working days. When a matter requires fuller investigation than is possible within the normal timescale, the complainant will be informed and an indication given of when a final response can be expected.

## C) Definition

Parents will frequently raise legitimate concerns about their children's education. Most parents do not regard such inquiries as "complaints" in the formal sense. Nevertheless, their concerns will be addressed with similar urgency and thoroughness. If matters raised as concerns are not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the party who is dissatisfied may wish to appeal through the formal complaints procedure.

## D) Complaints Procedures

### 1) Complaints from pupils

Pupils who feel they have been unfairly treated are encouraged to speak to the appropriate manager, usually the Progress Leader. He/she will investigate the complaint and will seek to resolve the matter informally between the pupil and the member of staff. Where the complaint or subsequent investigation raises issues of a disciplinary significance, the matter should be referred immediately to the Headteacher.

### 2) Receipt of complaints from parents or others

- i. Telephone complaints should be directed to the Head's PA who will complete a complaint form (Formal Complaint Record) and refer the matter to the Headteacher.
- ii. Verbal complaints or allegations made by a visitor to the school will be referred to any available member of the senior management team who will complete a complaint form.
- iii. Written complaints received by school staff should be copied immediately to the Head's PA who will complete a complaint form and attach the copy letter.

### **3) Verbal complaints received by governors**

In normal circumstances, the governor should advise the complainant to contact the school direct. If the complainant is reluctant to do so or has already done so, the governor should ensure he/she understands the full facts as perceived by the complainant without making any commitment or comment on the issue, except that it will be investigated and that a response will be provided either direct to the complainant or via the governor. The governor should then discuss the matter with the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher.

### **E) Written complaints received by governors**

It is the responsibility of the governor receiving the complaint to ensure that it is acknowledged within three working days of receipt. The letter of complaint should be passed to the Headteacher and the Chairman of Governors should be informed. The matter will be investigated in the usual way and a copy of the response sent to the receiving governor and to the Chair of Governors.

### **F) Processing of complaints**

The Headteacher will investigate or cause investigation to be made of all complaints, except in cases relating to alleged misconduct of the Headteacher. Where such allegations have been made against the Headteacher, the deputy head may be authorised to investigate in the first instance. Thereafter the LA's Personnel Procedures will apply.

No action will be taken without the subject(s) of the complaint having opportunity to comment on the complaint and to identify independent witnesses who might be called upon to provide evidence to the investigating manager.

Most complaints are satisfactorily resolved by the appropriate manager reporting back, usually in writing, to the complainant. If the complainant is still not satisfied, they may appeal to the Headteacher, who has final authority in matters of the internal organisation, management and control of the Headteacher. If a parent feels that the Headteacher has acted unreasonably in the exercise of his/her duties and powers, he/she may appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors.

The outcome of the investigation and any action taken as a result will be entered in the record of complaints. The Headteacher will provide a report each term to the Full Governing Body on complaints received and any implications arising.

### **G) The Role of the Governing Body**

Complaints about the school's policies or procedures will be referred to the Chair of Governors for consideration by the relevant governors' committee.

Complaints about the Headteacher or any governor should be directed to the Chair of Governors. Allegations of misconduct will be dealt with according to the relevant county procedures.

Representations to the Chair of Governors concerning the treatment of a complaint may, at the discretion of the Chair, be referred to an appeal panel of three governors convened for that purpose.

In matters which fall within the scope of county procedures, such as for exclusion appeals or staff disciplinary matters, those procedures will take precedence.

## **H) The Role of Ofsted**

Any parent who has made a complaint to the school and feels it has not been resolved to their satisfaction will be referred to Ofsted. The address of Ofsted can be sought from the School.

This policy was approved by the Governing Body and will be reviewed bi-annually

Date Policy Agreed: March 2017

Date of Review: March 2019

Signature of Chair of Governors:

Date: March 2018



