



Short Wood Primary School

Complaints Policy

Date of Policy creation	June 2013
Policy lead	Susan Harris
Date of Policy adoption by Governing body	
Frequency of review	Every 3 years
Review due	September 2019



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Procedures for Dealing with Complaints

At Short Wood Primary School, we undertake to provide a friendly and safe environment in which pupils will be helped to achieve their potential, both academically and socially.

We believe that a close partnership between the school, parents and pupils is essential to ensure pupil progress and well-being. In support of this, parents are invited to enter a Home-School Agreement. This agreement sets out the school's aims and values, as well as the responsibilities of the school and parents, and our expectations of pupils.

Through our programme of meetings between parents and teachers, as well as through informal contact, we provide opportunities for parents to raise matters of concern - about the curriculum or more general issues. If a concern is not resolved through discussion with a teacher, the parent or the teacher can refer it to the head teacher. Complaints from members of the public should be made directly to the head teacher.

The school considers a complaint principally to be an expression of grievance or dissatisfaction received from or on behalf of a parent or member of the public regarding:

- Action taken by or on behalf of the school.
- Failure by the school or its staff or contractors to respond to a reported problem.
- The standard of service(s) provided or discrimination in their delivery.
- The policies of the school.

A parent or member of the public can make their complaint in the first instance either verbally or in writing to the Headteacher. Where the Headteacher is the subject of the complaint the complainant should write to the Chair of Governors c/o Short Wood Primary School.

Following receipt of a complaint not involving the Headteacher, an investigation into the circumstances of the complaint will be carried out by the Headteacher.



The head teacher will then offer a meeting with the parent or other complainant, as far as possible at a mutually convenient time. At that meeting, and through discussion, the head teacher will seek an acceptable outcome, to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

If the head teacher is unable to resolve the complaint within 5 school days, or is the subject of the complaint, the head teacher or the complainant can refer it to the chair of governors.

The Chair of Governors will ask for the complaint to be put in writing. It is helpful if the complainant can set out their concern in detail, but this is not essential. An acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant within five working days and the complainant will be advised of the name of the person dealing with the complaint. The Chair will offer to meet the complainant at a mutually convenient time, within 10 working days to see if a resolution can be found.

If the complaint is still not resolved the Chair of Governors will arrange a meeting of the complaints committee of the governing body, as far as possible at a time convenient to all parties, within 15 school days. The complainant, the head teacher and any member of staff about whom there are complaints will be invited to the meeting. Any person invited can bring a friend or supporter if they wish.

If the complaint is complex, the chair of governors can appoint an investigating officer to gather evidence and conduct preliminary interviews. The investigating officer will then attend the hearing of the complaints committee in hearing the case.

The complaints committee will consider any written material, and also give the person making the complaint and the head teacher and staff an opportunity to state their case and to question the other side. The committee will ensure that all present are treated fairly.

The committee will give a decision as soon as possible after the hearing, and will confirm it in writing, along with the reasons for their decision. The letter will also explain the right of appeal to an external body if the complaint is not accepted.



Thereafter complainants still not satisfied with the outcome can write to:

The Secretary of State for Education

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

Westminster

London SW1P 3BT



Short Wood Primary School

Complaints Flow Chart

Time Frame	Action / Process	
	Complaint received. Headteacher investigates circumstances.	Informal Stage
1 - 5 working days	Informal meeting arranged between the complainant and member of leadership team of school (Head, Deputy, Chair or Vice Chair).	
	Complainant not satisfied with outcome of informal meeting or complaint involves Headteacher.	Start of Formal Stage
10 working days	Formal complaint to Chair of Governors. Meeting between Chair and complainant	
15 working days	Chair notifies Chair of Complaints Committee who confirms the date of the meeting with other Governors	Formal Stage
	Complainant and Headteacher invited to attend the meeting - the notification should inform the complainant of his/her rights to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend/representative. It should also be explained how the meeting will be conducted and of the complainants right to submit further written evidence to the Committee.	
	Headteacher invited to prepare a written report in response to the complaint.	
	All relevant correspondence circulated to the Complaints Committee, the complainant and the Headteacher in advance of the meeting.	
	If the Complainant or the Headteacher wish to call witnesses the agreement of the Committee Chair should be obtained in advance.	



	<p>The Complaints meeting</p> <p>The following procedure to be noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complainant and Headteacher to present their view. Individually. • The Committee to question the complainant and the Headteacher regarding the issues raised. 	
	<p>The Committee Chair should explain to the complainant and the Headteacher that the Committee will consider its decision.</p>	
<p>No more than 20 days following the Complaints Committee Meeting</p>	<p>The Committee will consider the complaint and all the evidence presented and reach a unanimous, or at least a majority decision. The decision will be finding to uphold or not uphold the complaint, or uphold some parts and not others.</p>	
	<p>The Committee decides on the action to be taken. A written statement outlining the decision with reasons to both the complainant and the Headteacher.</p>	
	<p>The complainant should be advised that if he/ she is dissatisfied with the outcome he/she has the right to take the matter further by writing to the Secretary of State.</p>	