



Complaints Policy & Procedure

TOGETHER WE

Inspire Enjoy Achieve



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide parents, carers and other individuals with information about what courses of action are open to them if they have a concern with the school, and how complaints will be dealt with.

Our policy is to deal with concerns, problems or complaints in an effective, fair, consistent and prompt manner. We always hope that concerns and issues that you may have can be addressed informally and encourage regular discussion with your child's class teacher.

We would always hope to be able to address any concerns promptly and informally where possible, however we recognise that occasionally a formal procedure may be needed.

PRINCIPLES

We recognise that raising a complaint is a stressful and difficult process, and keep to the following principles to make it as straightforward and fair as possible:

- Any concerns will be dealt with promptly within a reasonable timescale
- Complaints will be investigated carefully prior to a decision being made
- The interests of children will be our first priority
- You will be given full opportunity to explain the nature of your concerns
- You will be given the opportunity to be accompanied should your complaint go to a panel hearing
- Raising any concern or complaint will not adversely affect your child

PROCEDURE

1. Informal discussion

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your child's education, or have concerns relating to the school, we encourage you to speak to your child's class teacher as soon as possible. Our staff are all committed to providing a high standard of education to each child in a supportive environment, and as such will always want to address concerns as quickly as possible.

If you raise a concern in this way with your child's class teacher, other members of staff may become involved if appropriate or relevant.

If this approach has been unsuccessful in dealing with your problem, or if circumstances mean you feel this would be inappropriate, you should raise your concerns formally through the complaints procedure below.

2. Raising a formal complaint

Letter

If you feel you need to raise a formal complaint you should do so in writing to the Headteacher, stating as clearly as possible the nature of your complaint. If you are seeking a particular outcome, specifying this in the letter can be helpful.

Acknowledgement

The Headteacher will write to you formally acknowledging your complaint as soon as possible but no later than five working days from receipt of your letter. At this point a reasonable timescale will be identified by when you can expect a formal response. This may depend on the circumstances and the nature of your complaint, but would usually be within no more than 10 school days.

Investigation

The Headteacher will investigate your complaint. This may involve talking to members of staff and also may involve asking you for additional information in order to help him establish the facts.

Decision

Once the Headteacher has investigated thoroughly he will make a decision about your complaint.

He will write to let you know this decision as soon as possible, within the timescale previously discussed, and will also let you know what if any action will be taken as a result.

Appeal

You do have the right to appeal the decision that has been made. If you would like to do so you should write to the Chair of Governors within five working days of receipt of the letter confirming the outcome of the original grievance.

Panel hearing

Your appeal will then be heard by a panel consisting of two members of the school governing body and one external independent third party. None of the panel members will have had any involvement in your complaint prior to the hearing.

The hearing will take place no more than 10 school days after your appeal has been received by the Chair of Governors.

You will be invited to attend the hearing if you wish, but you do not have to do so. If you do wish to attend, you can bring someone with you for support and advice.

Having heard your reasons for appealing the original decision and reviewing all the evidence the panel will then make a decision to either uphold the original outcome of the complaint or to revise it.

Further appeal

If you are still not satisfied with how your complaint has been handled there is no further appeal stage internally. However in certain circumstances the Education Funding Agency will consider complaints. In particular this option is available where either the school has acted in breach of its funding agreement, or where your complaint has not been handled according to an appropriate procedure.

If you feel your complaint comes under either of these categories and you would like to approach the Education Funding Agency, details of how to do so will be provided on request.

Policy Created: March 2015

Policy approved by:

Godmanchester Community Education Trust

Eleanor Deem

Godmanchester Community Academy

Rod Warsap

Chair of Governors

Roger Coxhead

Policy review date: March 2017