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Complaints Policy

Policy Reference:	C4
Created by:	Acting Deputy Headteacher Miss B J Cook
Responsibility:	Strategy Committee
Reviewed by:	Governing Body / SST
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Cycle:	Bi-Annual
Ratified by Full Governing Body on:	15 th March 2010
Signed:	

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'C. Norris'.

Mr Clive Norris

Chairman of Governors

At Guillemont Junior School we believe that close partnership with parents and our community bring the best outcomes for children. We value comments from our parent body that help us to improve the range and quality of experiences offered to all children. Parents can express their views via a number of evaluation opportunities, through informal daily contact with staff and during Parent Consultation meetings.

With such close working partnerships it is hoped that any concerns or complaints can be resolved as soon as they arise. However, should this not be the case, this policy outlines the procedures for parents to follow when they have a general complaint and the school response at each stage.

Aims

Through these procedures we will:

- Work to resolve concerns through informal discussions at the earliest stage
- Focus on resolution and service review rather than blame
- Handle all complaints in a sensitive and confidential manner
- Operate a fair and transparent investigative process for staff as well as complainants
- Indicate other sources of advice, for example, the Citizens Advice Bureau, parent partnership services, the LEA complaints adviser.

Where complaints cannot be resolved in an informal way the following process will be followed. If the complaint is resolved at any stage no further action need be taken. If the complainant is not satisfied, then the process moves to the next stage.

Complaints Procedure

If you are ever at all unhappy with anything that happens to your child whilst in our care, please let the school know. The best person to help you generally will be your child’s class teacher.

A complaint is technically the airing of a grievance by an individual or group of individuals against another individual or group of individuals. Complaints of a serious nature must be brought to the attention of the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher, who will always want to meet with you to solve difficulties and address the complaint.

In the context of a school, the majority of complaints are likely to be made by a pupil or parent concerning something that has happened in the course of the education of the pupil. However, this is not the only source of complaints and any policy must cover any combination of the eventualities shown below:

All complaints regardless of origin or nature, will be given due attention with an immediate response from a senior member of staff if this is practicable. There are five stages to this process:

1. Preliminary Stage

- a. Parents are encouraged to speak informally with the appropriate member of staff (usually the class teacher) as soon as they have a concern.
- b. Advice may be sought from other members of school staff to resolve the concern.
- c. Details of the concern and the action agreed will be recorded on a Parent / Teacher Consultation Sheet which will then be copied to parents and filed with the HT in school. (Appendix 1)

2. Stage One

- a. Parents should write to the Headteacher outlining the complaint
- b. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school days
- c. The school will investigate the complaint and meet with the complainant
- d. The outcome will be confirmed within 20 school days
- e. The school will offer a resolution
- f. After a further 10 school days the matter will be deemed to be resolved unless escalated to Stage 2

3. Stage Two

- a. The complainant should write to the Chair of Governors
- b. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 school days
- c. The Chair of Governors will speak with the Headteacher
- d. The Chair of Governors will decide who is responsible for dealing with the issues involved. The Governing Body is responsible for the school’s aims and objectives, priorities and targets, and policies. The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school as well as for making day-to-day decisions
- e. The Chair of Governors will meet with both parties individually to try and resolve the complaint
- f. The Chair of Governors will offer a solution if the issue is related to delegated responsibilities
- g. After a further 10 school days the matter will be deemed to be resolved unless escalated to Stage 3

4. Stage Three

- a. Parents should write to the Clerk of the Governors, describing the issue in detail, explaining why they are dissatisfied with the outcomes of the previous stages and requesting a complaints panel hearing
- b. When the issue relates to delegated responsibilities the panel can consider the matter
- c. If the matter falls within the Headteacher’s decision making remit the panel will only have the power to review the decision
- d. The panel will consist of three Governors with no previous involvement in the matter
- e. The Clerk will inform the complainant in writing of the panel’s decision within two days following the meeting

5. Stage Four

The Local Education Authority (LEA) offers a further right of appeal for parents who have exhausted the school’s procedures if the complaint is about:

- The National Curriculum and related matters
- Provision of collective worship and religious education.

For general complaints about a school the LEA has no powers to direct the school to change its decision.

Anonymous complaints will gain no response from the school. However, the Headteacher or Chairman of Governors will need to consider whether the issue and fear of identification are genuine or whether the issue is one of child abuse and then respond accordingly (Safeguarding).

Appendix 1

Parent / Teacher Consultation Sheet (concern)

NAME:

NAME OF CHILD:

CLASS OF CHILD:

DATE:

OUTLINE OF COMPLAINT:

AGREED ACTION:

TIME SCALE OF ACTION:

SIGNATURE OF CLASS TEACHER:

PRINT NAME:

SIGNATURE OF PARENT:

PRINT NAME: