



Brookhurst Primary School

## Complaints Policy

We believe that our school provides a good education for all our children. We are pleased with the positive relationships that have been built and maintained with our parents.

However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. The following policy sets out the procedure that the school follows in such cases.

If any parent is unhappy with the education that their child is receiving, or has any concern relating to the school, we encourage that person to talk to the child's class teacher immediately.

We deal with all complaints in accordance with procedures set out by the LA. If the school cannot resolve any complaint itself, those concerned can ask the LA to intervene.

All parents have the right, as a last resort, to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education, if they still feel that their complaint has not been properly addressed.

### **Aims and objectives**

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding and, in all cases, we put the interests of the child above all other issues. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

The complaints process

### Informal stage (stage 1)

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they always want to know if there is a problem, so that they can take action before the problem seriously affects the child's progress.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the Headteacher. The Headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Should a parent have a complaint about the Headteacher, s/he should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the governing body, who is obliged to investigate it. The governor in question will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome, s/he can make a formal complaint, as outlined below.

### Formal stage (Stage 2)

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body.

By this point the complaint should be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. The complainant should also indicate a possible solution.

The parent should forward this written complaint, together with any supportive papers, to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will respond in writing to the complainant.

The Chair of Governors, possibly with advice from the LA, will investigate in order to determine whether it is a matter for a \*Complaints Panel or if it is an issue of staff conduct in which case Personnel Procedures should be followed. If the Personnel Procedures are to be followed it is advisable for

the Chair to inform the Complainant since they would not be told the outcome in such a case.

\*The Complaints Panel would consist of three governors with no prior knowledge of the case.

After hearing all the evidence, the Complaints Panel consider their decision and inform the parent about it in writing. The governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

### **LA Stage (Stage 3)**

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to the LA. Further information about this process is available from the school or from the LA. A further meeting is chaired by an officer nominated by the County Education Officer, who considers all the evidence and makes a further judgement in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

### **Secretary of State or Ombudsman (Stage 4)**

If any parent is still not content that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then s/he is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

The Local Government Ombudsman will only become involved in those cases where possible maladministration has occurred.

### **Monitoring and review**

The governors monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Headteacher logs all formal complaints received by the school and records how they were resolved. Governors are informed of all formal complaints on a termly basis.

Records of informal complaints are maintained by class teachers and are available for Governor's on request.

Governors take into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and make any modifications necessary to this policy. This policy is made available to all parents, so that they can be properly informed about the complaints process.