

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Legislation

This procedure is based on dealing with school complaints issues by the department for Education in 2011.

General principles

Bernard Gilpin Primary School has a 3 stage process for dealing with formal complaints. Further details of each stage together with roles and responsibilities of staff involved can be found in Section 3 of this document. The 3 stages are:

Stage 1 – complaint heard by a member of staff

Stage 2 – complaint heard by headteacher

Stage 3 – complaint heard by Governing Body's Complaints Appeal Panel

Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance, without the need to invoke the formal complaints procedure. In most cases this can be achieved by a discussion between the class teacher and the complainant.

School has a nominated member of staff who acts as Complaints Co-ordinator. This is Mr P. Iveson, Deputy Headteacher. The Complaints Co-ordinator is responsible for the following:

- Acknowledging receipt of the complaint
- Effective recording of all complaints received
- Monitoring responses
- Ensuring responses are made within a reasonable time scale
- Identifying trends and themes arising from complaints and reporting to the school's senior management team.

Time scales

Complaints will be acknowledged, investigated and resolved as soon as possible. The complainant will be notified of the anticipated timescales for dealing with the complaint when receipt of the complaint is acknowledged.

Stages

Stage 1: Complaint heard by staff member

The aim is to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible opportunity via informal resolution by way of a discussion with the class teacher or relevant member of staff. The Complaints Co-ordinator will be notified of the complaint and outcome.

Stage 2: Complaint heard by Headteacher

During this stage the Headteacher, Mr A. Bainbridge, can delegate the task of collating evidence and information relating to the complaint but the decision on any action to be taken as a result of the complaint and the response should come from the Headteacher.

Stage 3: Complaint heard by Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel

If the complainant remains dissatisfied following the previous stages, they may write to the Chair of the Governing Body, Mr Alan Hennis, giving full details of the complaint and the reason why he/she remains dissatisfied with previous attempts to resolve the complaint.

The Chair will then convene a Governing Body Complaints panel. The Governing Body Complaints Panel should consist of 3-5 Governors. The Chair of the Complaints Panel will ensure the complainant is informed of the Panel's decision, in writing, within 15 days of the panel hearing.

The Chair of Governors may be contacted in writing at the following address (please mark correspondence Private and Confidential): Mr Alan Hennis, c/o Bernard Gilpin Primary School, Hall Lane, Houghton-le-Spring, DH5 8DA.

Managing and recording complaints

The Complaints Co-ordinator will keep a log of all complaints received as this will help identify any recurrent themes or trends.

A file will also be kept containing all written communication in relation to the complaint together with notes of any telephone conversations etc.

Flowchart – Summary of dealing with complaints

