

Lainesmead Primary School and Nursery



Complaints Policy

This policy should be used in conjunction with the DFE Guidance (School Complaints Tool Kit 2016)

Approved by Governors: January 2018

Signatures

Headteacher Eirian Painter

Chair of Governors Leigh Timbrell

Lainesmead Primary School and Nursery Policy for dealing with complaints

1. Introduction

This document sets out the school's policy for resolving complaints made by parent/carer, guardian or member of the community.

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or pupils are concerns rather than complaints. Lainesmead Primary School and Nursery is committed to taking concerns and complaints seriously and dealing with them in a sensitive, impartial and confidential manner.

For the school to be able to investigate a complaint, it needs to be made within one academic year of the incident occurring. If a complaint is older than a year, it will not be investigated.

The school will provide sufficient opportunity for a complaint to be fully discussed and will aim to resolve it to the satisfaction of the complainant through open dialogue and mutual understanding.

If an individual Governor is approached about a complaint then the Governor will direct the complainant to the Headteacher with a view to resolving the issue informally. The Governor will not become involved in any detail of the complaint at this stage.

The school will not respond to anonymous complaints under this policy, however, the headteacher and / or chair of governors will consider whether the issue and fear of identification are genuine or the issue is one of child protection.

2. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Raising a concern informally with a staff member and/or senior leader other than the Headteacher

Most complaints are best dealt with informally. If you have a concern or complaint about the school or the education provided, you should discuss the matter with your child's class teacher at the earliest opportunity or if you are a member of the community, you should contact the School Office. The vast majority of concerns will be satisfactorily dealt with in this way.

If you feel unable to discuss the issue with the class teacher you should complete a concern form (Appendix A) and hand into the office. This will then be passed to

the next tier of management, usually one of the Assistant Headteachers, depending on the nature of the concern. If this possibility has already been attempted then the Deputy Headteacher will be contacted. Senior leaders will consider all complaints seriously and will make every attempt to resolve the matter at this stage.

If you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 1, your complaint should be sent in writing (Appendix B) to the Headteacher within 10 school days of receiving the Stage 1 response from the school.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint heard by the Headteacher

Formal complaints should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. A record of formal complaints is kept by the school. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three school working days of receiving it. A copy of the Complaints Policy (and a link to an electronic copy of the Policy) will be included with this acknowledgment letter.

The Headteacher will investigate the complaint. The possible outcomes from this investigation are: (1) an apology, (2) notification of the actions to be taken to resolve the issue, (3) notification that the complaint is unsubstantiated. The Headteacher may delegate the task of collating the information to another staff member, but not the decision on the action to be taken.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Headteacher may request a meeting with the complainant within 10 school days of receipt of the formal complaint. If this time limit is unrealistic for the level of investigation required the Headteacher may set a new time limit and the complainant will be sent details of the new deadline with an explanation of the delay.

Following the investigation, the Headteacher will send a written response to the complainant. The written response will inform the complainant of the Headteacher's decision and if appropriate the action to be taken to resolve the complaint. The written response will be sent either within ten school days of receipt of the formal complaint, or the subsequent meeting, if applicable.

If you are not satisfied with the result at Stage 2, and wish to appeal the decision, you should inform the School Office in writing. The complaint will be heard by the Governors' Complaints Appeal Panel (Stage 3) as outlined below. This request must be made within ten school working days of receiving the school's written response.

Stage 3: Formal Complaint heard by the Governing Body Complaints Appeal Panel

The role of the panel is to ensure that the complaint has been investigated by the Headteacher in a fair, open and proper manner. It is not the role of the panel to investigate the complaint itself.

The panel will consist of three Governors who have no detailed prior knowledge of the complaint or connection with the complainant. The Chair of the Governing Body will not be present at the meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 15 school days of your request, but you will be notified if the panel requires more time to consider the complaint.

You will have the opportunity to submit written evidence on the complaint prior to the meeting of the panel and also to attend part of the meeting, accompanied by a friend/partner if wished, to put your case. Once you have left the meeting, the Headteacher, or a school representative, will be given the same opportunity to present to the panel.

The meeting will be minuted but not by a Governor hearing the appeal. These minutes are confidential and available to the panel members only as an aide-memoir.

The panel will aim to write to you with its conclusion within five school days of the meeting. The panel's intention will be to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and require more detailed investigation. In this situation, you will receive an interim response from the panel within five school working days of the meeting, outlining what is being done to deal with the matter, together with details of when a full reply can be expected. The decision of the Governors' Appeal Panel is final.

Complaint about the Headteacher

If your concern or complaint is about the Headteacher, then it may be appropriate for you to write to the Chair of Governors. All correspondence must go via the School Office and will be passed onto the Chair. Please state the nature of the concern/complaint, the steps taken to resolve it and the action you would like to see taken to remedy your concerns. The Chair of Governors will make arrangements for your complaint to be investigated. Following the investigation, the Chair will give a written response within ten school working days. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, the complaint will be heard by the Governors' Complaint Appeal Panel as outlined above.

3. What to do if you are not satisfied with how your complaint had been dealt with:

If you consider that the governing body has not acted properly in carrying out its investigation into your complaint you have a right to complain to the Local Authority (LA) as it has a responsibility to ensure that governing bodies act properly. The LA does not have the power to instruct a governing body to reverse its decision but will want to satisfy itself that the governing body has conducted the investigation fairly.

In the unlikely event that you will need to complain to the LA about the governing body's handling of a complaint please write to:

Group Director: Children Services
Swindon Borough Council
Beckhampton St
SN1 2JH

Please note that the LA can only act when each step of the school's complaints procedure has been followed.

If you think your school's governing body or your local authority is acting 'unreasonably' you can write to the Secretary of State for Education. Complaints to the Secretary of State are handled by the government's Department for Education (DfE) (www.education.gov.uk/form/school-complaints-form)

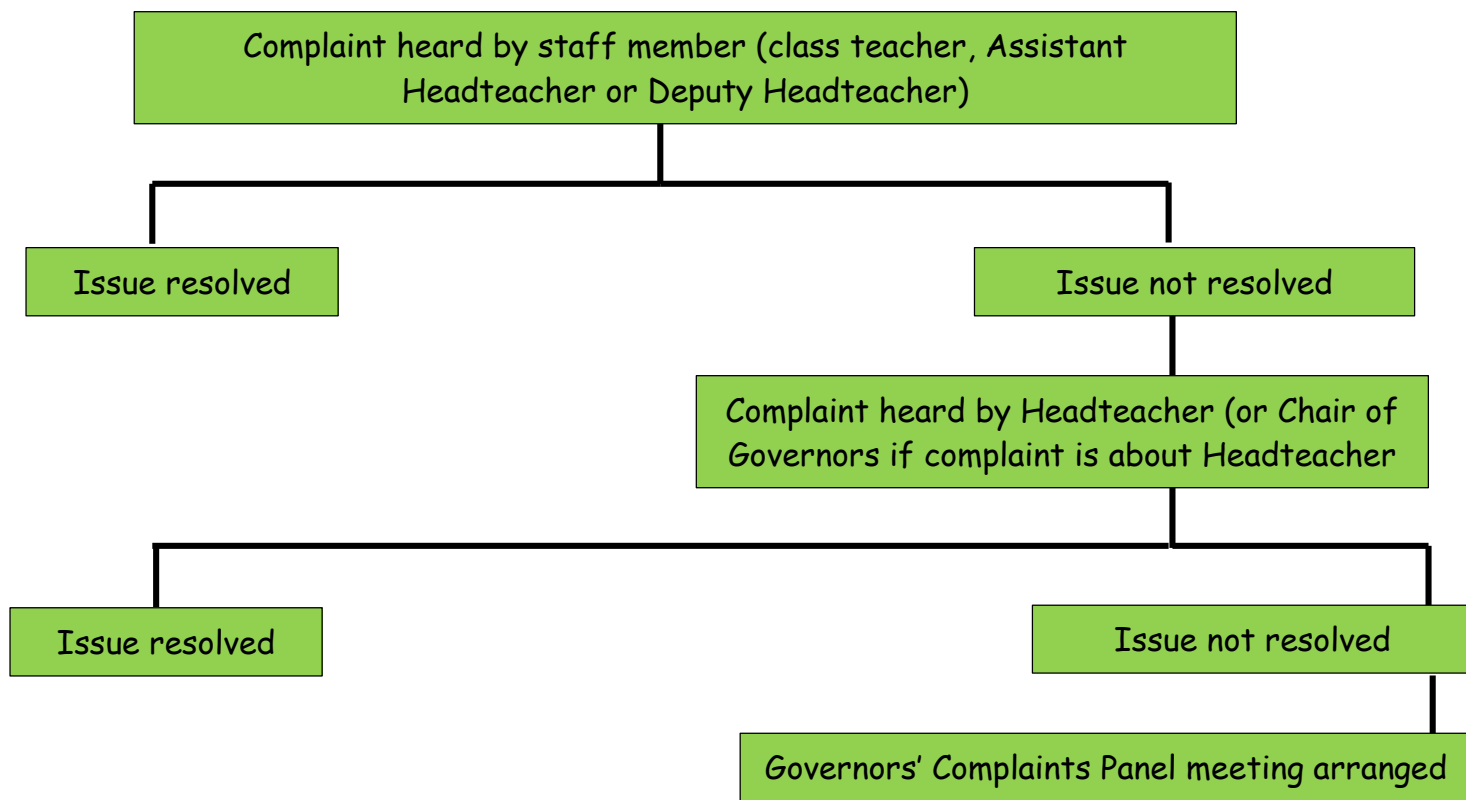
4. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will log all formal complaints received by the school and will record how they were resolved. This policy will be reviewed annually and the Governing body meeting will review the quantity and nature of complaints received.

5. Availability

A copy of this policy is available to all parents on request. It is also available on the school's website.

SUMMARY OF DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS





PARENT CONCERN FORM

Pupil Name:	Class:
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Parent/Carer Name:	Relationship to Pupil:
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Please tick to indicate who you have already spoken to regarding your concern:

	✓
Class teacher	
Assistant Head teacher (Mrs Chapman/Miss Bees/Mrs Saxby*) <i>*Please circle</i>	
Deputy Head teacher (Mrs Mepstead)	
Head teacher (Mrs Painter)	

Main area of discussion - please circle:	<i>Child's work</i>	<i>Behaviour</i>	<i>Health / Medical</i>
<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Social difficulties outside</i>	<i>Social difficulties in school</i>	<i>Home life</i>

Is there anything further you would like us to be aware of?

FOR OFFICE USE:	
Taken by: Passed to:	Date/time:

Action Taken:

Feedback to parent

Date:

Time:

Outcome:

Complaint Form



Please complete and return to the school office who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give specific details of your complaint:

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response?)

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details:

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: