

# Seaview Primary School



## Complaints Policy

## **Introduction**

We believe that Seaview Primary School provides an excellent education for all our children, and that the Headteacher and other staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. We have in place clear lines of communication with all parents. In doing so, complaints are kept to a minimum.

However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents. We take any complaint seriously and we deal with them professionally, following set procedures. The following policy sets out the procedures that the school follows in such cases.

## **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**

### **Stage 1 (Informal Stage)**

- The complainant has an informal discussion with the person closely involved with the complainant's cause for concern, or with the Headteacher direct.
- If after the discussion the matter is not resolved, or if the complainant is not happy with the way that it has been handled, then the process moves to the next stage. However, every effort should be made to resolve the matter at this stage.

### **Stage 2 (Formal Stage)**

- Once a formal written complaint is received from the complainant, then the Headteacher will undertake an investigation and reply in writing to the complainant within 15 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome then the complainant should move to the next stage.
- If a formal written complaint is received about the Headteacher from the complainant, then the complaint must be sent to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governors, with a written reply being sent to the complainant within 15 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, then the complainant should move to the next stage.

### **Stage 3 (Formal Stage)**

- The complainant writes formally to the Chair of Governors via the Clerk to the Governors (Complaints Appeal Panel), outlining the reasons why s/he is not happy with the outcomes of the Headteacher's investigation.
- The complainant requests that an Appeals Panel reviews the complaint.
- An Appeals Panel meets within 12 to 20 days after receipt of the complainant's letter.
- The complainant may request an investigation by the Local Authority if he/she feels that that the review has not been handled fairly, or if it has not been conducted in accordance with the school's complaints procedures.

## **Formal Complaint to a Local Authority**

- Once a request has been received, the Local Authority Complaints Officer will only investigate whether the school has followed correct procedures in dealing with complaint, but will not investigate the complainant's original complaint.
- After the investigation, the Complaints Officer will write formerly to the complainant.

- If the result is that the school did not follow correct procedures, the complaint will be referred back to the Chair of the Governing Body.
- If the result is that the school dealt with the complaint correctly, the Local Authority cannot make the school change its decision.
- The complainant may now wish to lodge an appeal with the Secretary of State for Education or with the Local Government Ombudsman.

## **Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

### **Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has:

- a duty to have in place a complaints procedure;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher, to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- in place a self-evaluation process to monitor the way complaints are dealt with;
- responsibility of taking into account any local or national decisions that affect the complaints process, and will make any modifications necessary to this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents, or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

### **Role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher will:

- log all complaints received by the school and record how they were resolved;
- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually, or when the need arises by the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

***Reviewed – October 2019***