



Policy: Complaints

Adopted by Governing Body on	October 2019
Headteacher	L Jones
Date of Review	September 2023

Introduction

At Deepcar St John's CE Junior School we all work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. Our aim is to deal with issues and problems before they become a 'complaint'. However there is a clear protocol to follow if necessary and the steps to follow and their outcome are outlined in this document.

Rationale

At Deepcar St John's CE Junior we are happy to listen to any ideas about improving our school. All members of the school community are valued and we want everyone to be able to express their views and know that they will be listened to.

All ideas, concerns or complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible and thoroughly. We are obviously primarily concerned with the quality of education and welfare of each child and whenever a complaint is made, every effort will be made to rectify the issue and if necessary action will be taken to try to prevent the problem happening again. The school will not investigate an anonymous complaint or allegation.

Aims

- To promote a simple procedure for dealing with complaints
- To encourage parents and members of the school community to share their views through the correct channels
- To increase mutual understanding between parents and the school community
- To help parents and the community work together for the benefit of each child

A complaint may be made informally or formally and all parties are asked to respect confidentiality. Parents should be assured that making a complaint will not adversely affect their child. We promise we will always be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint and to deal with them as swiftly as possible. Our focus will always be on the child and what is best for them.

The complaints process

Stage 1 Informal expression of concern	i)	In the first instance, the matter should be discussed with the child's class teacher. In our experience most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way with apologies where necessary.
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made to the school	<p>ii) If the concern has not been resolved discuss this with the class teacher again to attempt to resolve the matter. The teacher may deem it necessary to involve the school's senior leadership team at this stage</p> <p>iii) If the concern has not been resolved discuss this with a member of the senior leadership team.</p>
Stage 2 Formal complaint	<p>Complaints at this stage should be written. Your correspondence should be addressed to the Head teacher and marked 'Private and Confidential'. The letter should say why you still remain unhappy and what you wish to see happen. The Headteacher will let you know when your complaint is to be considered. If a meeting with you and others involved is considered necessary you will be given adequate notice to prepare. You will be informed of the outcome of the head teachers investigation and decision on what further action will be taken within 10 school days. If this is not possible a letter will be sent explaining why. The head teacher will keep a written record of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation.</p>
Stage 3 Formal complaint to the Governors	<p>If the complaint is not resolved, and all previous stages have been explored, a parent may make representation to the Governors. A letter addressed to the Chair of Governors marked 'Private and confidential' can be left at the school office. If the Governors consider from your letter that the complaint warrants further investigation they may ask you to explain your case in person before an appointed panel. However, it is also possible that, following investigation, they make a decision without you needing to appear. A decision will be provided within 15 days where possible.</p>

Resolving complaints

At each stage in the complaint, schools and complainant will want to keep in mind ways in which a complaint can be resolved. It might be sufficient to acknowledge that the complaint is valid in whole or part. In addition it may be appropriate to offer one or more of the following:

- An apology;
- *An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- Assurance that the event that the basis of the complaint will not recur
- Explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure it doesn't happen again. Details of any disciplinary procedures that have taken place as a result of the complaint will not be shared

- An undertaking to review school policy or procedure in light of the complaint
- An explanation that there is insufficient evidence and thus the complaint cannot be upheld
- An explanation that, following investigation, the evidence does not substantiate the concern.

*An admission that the school could have handled things better is not the same as an admission of negligence

Monitoring and review

The governors will monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The Head teacher will log all stage 2 complaints received by the school and how they were resolved. These will be reported as part of the Head teacher report to governors.

The Governors will review this policy as necessary.

Model School Complaints Form

Your name:

Pupil's name:

Your relationship to the pupil:

School:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give 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:

For Official use by the school

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date:

Guidance on Making a Complaint

Try to resolve issues with the school informally at first. If matters are not resolved to your satisfaction you can make a formal complaint, however, at all times, please remember that matters can often be dealt with more easily if you bear in mind the following:

Speak to the right person

Try to speak with the member of staff best able to advise you and best able to deal with your concerns. This is often your child's class teacher in the first instance. If they are unable to deal with an issue immediately they may suggest making an appointment at a more convenient time for both parties to discuss matters more thoroughly.

Be courteous

Conduct yourself in a professional manner and try to discuss your concerns in a calm but firm manner. Try to understand the other's point of view and do not present yourself in an aggressive manner.

Say who you are

If you are unknown to the member of staff, introduce yourself.

Ask for the member of staff's name and use it

If the member of staff you first approach is unable to deal with the matter ask for the name of the member of the school's staff who will be able to assist you.

Take your time to explain exactly what the issues are

It is often easy to forget to give all the details of your concern, particularly if you are upset or annoyed. You may wish to write a list of the issues you need to discuss before you approach school.

Stay cool and calm

Do not argue with the member of staff who receives your complaint. Be polite and respectful. Try to be clear about exactly what it is that you believe the issue to be.

Check you are being understood

Make certain that the member of staff understands what you are saying and what the issue is that has given rise to your concerns.

Don't rush

Take your time. Try to explain to school what your concern is and more importantly what you would like school to do to resolve this. Try to ensure the school understand your viewpoint before demanding a solution or suggesting the next step.